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LANGUAGE AND COMIC MOTIFS IN JOHNSON JONES HOOPER'S *SIMON SUGGS*

by

John Rachal

In Johnson Jones Hooper's *Adventures of Captain Simon Suggs*, Hooper has created a character whose language is as realistic and earthy as the narrator's is dignified and Addisonian. This contrast is a fundamental aspect of the much-discussed frame device common in early Southern humor. It is Simon's language, rather than his narrator's, that usually gets the laughs, and that, coupled with comic irony and Hooper's use of some established but not outworn comic motifs, is part of the essence of his humor.

Simon, the quintessential backwoods con-man, almost instinctively chooses imagery that tends toward the animalistic and the card game metaphor. He uses to great advantage similes such as "like a tick onder a cow's belly," "I'd see him as deep in hell as a pigeon could fly in a fortnight" (p. 43), and, in "The Muscadine Story," "Anybody would think 'twas as hard to git money from me as 'tis for a man to draw a headless tenpenny nail out'n an oak post with his teeth" (p. 159). Of his metaphors, two of the best are "prudence is the stob I fasten the grapevine of my cunnoo to" (p. 42) and "we have chewed the cud of this matter" (p. 5). Though none of the *Simon Suggs* adventures could be considered tall tales in the Davy Crockett tradition, Hooper does effectively use exaggeration, for example, "Strip, and I'll whip as much *dog* out of you as'll make a full pack of hounds!" (p. 170), "I'd cut the big vein of my neck before I'd *ever* desert sich a friend" (p. 45), and "I'd wade to my ears in blood, to fight by *that* man's side" (p. 45-6). In an unpublished thesis, Harry West has classified Hooper's metaphors and similes as thirty-nine percent "animal" and twenty-one "farm," the rest being miscellaneous, but with an emphasis on gambling. Simon also frequently manages to lower the honorable and even reverent subjects to a level aptly fitting

¹Johnson Jones Hooper, *Adventures of Captain Simon Suggs, Late of the Tallapoosa Volunteers* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1968), 83. Subsequent page references to *Simon Suggs* are to this edition and are given in the text.

his own unprincipled character: "‘Ah yes, *honesty*, HONESTY’S the stake that Simon Suggs will ALLERS tie to! What’s a man without his inteegerty?’" (p. 37) and, in a similar just mentioned, metaphor, "‘Yes’ — interrupted Suggs — ‘prudence is the stob I fasten the grape-vine of *my* cunnoo to’" (p. 42). Throughout the camp-meeting chapter Simon speaks of the serious subject of soul-saving in the card-game metaphor. Of course, Simon’s victims fail to see the subtle disparagement of the sentiments they supposedly hold dear; ironically they themselves perceive them in rather crass terms. Similarly, despite the lack of a pejorative metaphor, Simon’s indulgence in the sophisticated, authoritative, and official language of the military is ironic and hardly compliments the army in view of the character of the speaker:

“Whares, Betsy Haycock were brought up afore us, bein’ charged with infringin’ the rules of war by crossin’ of the lines agin orders, and Fort Suggs bein’ under martial law at the time, and likewise ecknowledged she was guilty, Tharfore we have tried her eccordin to said rules of war, and condemns her to be baggonetted to deth in one hour from this time, witness our hands and seals.” (p. 98)

Just as the narrator occasionally lowers his speech to sound like Simon’s (as in “Captain Suggs is human, and ‘as sich’ is liable to err, but it isn’t often that he can be ‘throwed’ by ordinary men” [p. 107]), Simon sometimes attempts to raise his level of speech to sound like the narrator’s. In this “sophisticated” speech of Simon’s, however, the voice of the backwoodsman rings noticeably louder. It is through this realistic language that the “Southwestern” humorists were both innovative and influential on later writers, not the least of whom was Mark Twain.

Along with the humorous language, there are a number of motifs which occur in the novel, some more than once, and which also invariably contribute to the humor. Already briefly mentioned is the recurrent gambling motif. The importance of card games in Southwestern life generally accounts for this pervasive motif in Southwestern humor. George Washington Harris’ Sut Lovingood asserts that along with swapping “hosses

wif fools," men were supposed, almost by nature, to "play short kerds." Gambling was custom-made for the rogue since, if he was sufficiently crafty, it afforded him the opportunity of gain with little risk. Simon, being the supreme rogue that he is, begins his card playing early. In the first chapter young Simon is gambling with (and cheating) a slave-boy, and when his father attempts to punish him, Simon cleverly entices his father into a bet concerning Simon's ability to perform a card trick. Hooper effectively personifies the cards as the elder Suggs is attempting to shuffle them:

Restive *kings* and *queens* jumped from his hands, or obstinately refused to slide into the company of the rest of the pack. Occasionally a sprightly *knave* would insist on *facing* his neighbor; or pressing his edge against another's, half double himself up, and then skip away. But elder Jed'diah perserveringly continued his attempts to subdue the refractory, while heavy drops burst from his forehead, and ran down his cheeks.
(p. 22)

Further, the use of gambling language which fails to be understood or correctly interpreted by the speaker's audience occurs at least twice in the novel. In the first chapter, Reverend Suggs, who "had only a vague idea of the pasteboard abomination called *cards*," whips Bill the slave-boy with a hickory stick and then asks Simon about the card he had previously been sitting on:

"I had it under my leg, thar, to make it on Bill, the first time it come trumps," was the ready reply.

"What's trumps?" asked Mr. Suggs, with a view of arriving at the import of the word.

"Nothin' a'n't trumps *now*," said Simon, who misapprehended his father's meaning — "but *clubs* was, when you came along and busted up the game."

A part of this answer was Greek to the Reverend Mr. Suggs, but a portion of it was full of meaning.
(p. 13)

Pascal Covici points out along the same line that the gambling lanugage is ingenuously misinterpreted in the camp-meeting chapter. Having convinced the congregation that he has been converted, Simon says, "‘No matter what sort of hand you’ve got . . . take stock! Here am I . . . come in on narry a pair and won a pile!’" (p. 122). The hearers interpret "narry a pair" as his previous sinful life and "won a pile" as the joy of his new-found salvation, whereas Simon and the reader see that the "pile" is coming from the collection plate "on the strength of his pretended conversion, [i.e.,] his bluff ‘hand’ with ‘narry a pair’ in it."² The former episode is remarkably parallel to the hilarious meeting of Scotty Briggs and the minister in Twain’s *Roughing It* in that both scenes deal with ministers, both use the card-game lingo, and both, at least initially, involve a mutual failure to communicate.

The gambling motif recurs briefly as a pastime at Fort Suggs, while in the fifth chapter, in which Simon impersonates General Witherspoon, the entire plot revolves around Simon’s confrontation with the professional card shark. Although Simon seems to lose against the gambler, the real victim is the shark himself who accepts Simon’s unauthorized offer of thirty of "the finest hogs of General Witherspoon’s uncommonly fine drove." This is a good example, along with the Reverend Bela Bugg episode, of the cheater with whom we are not sympathetic getting his due. Besides the chapters in which gambling or the gambling metaphor is important, the gambling motif is emphasized in that Hooper points out that Simon’s greatest weakness, his "*Achilles heel*, as one might say," is his belief that he can whip the "tiger," that is, "the elegant man dealing out the cards" from the Faro Bank. That Simon’s only weakness is this obsession for beating the tiger is, without the frequent examples, indicative of the importance of the gambling motif.

As common as the gambling motif is the "drinking" motif. Drinking played a large part in Southwestern life if *Simon Suggs* is any indication. As early as the seventh page Hooper speaks of the brilliant glow of the Captain’s eye whenever he is in the vicinity of "spiritous liquors." At one point Simon pauses on his hurried way to meet the Tiger in order to admire the win-

²Pascal Covici, *Mark Twain’s Humor: The Image of a World* (Dallas, 1962), 21.

dow of a drug store filled with "koniac," "old peach," "Tennessee" and "rot-gut." But in a noble demonstration of self-control Simon observes, "if I warn't goin' to run agin the bank, I'd sample of it, too, I reether expect. But it don't do for a man to sperrets much when he's pursuin' the beast" (p. 49). Throughout the Witherspoon chapter drinking acts as a background, culminating in Simon's generous gift of two baskets of champagne for the crowd, though of course *he* never troubles with the bill. In the Fort Suggs chapters, drinking again becomes a major pastime. Simon gets himself elected Captain by speaking of the need for "some sober, stiddy feller" while ironically drinking from his tumbler. In fact, the "chronometrical standard in use at Fort Suggs" (p. 91) was which "drink-time" it was — whether first, second, third or whichever.

Another motif, though less frequent, is that of anti-intellectualism or, as Hooper might have seen it, anti-culture. Walter Blair, recognizing the importance of Hooper's aristocratic Southern-gentleman viewpoint, writes, "Hooper the Southerner . . . sneered not only at his hero Suggs' shifty ways but also at his belief that mother wit was better than anything out of books. He obviously assumed that his readers would sneer with him."³ This is, in the main, true; Hooper does sneer at his hero. But there is a certain ambivalence in that the flawed nature of Simon's victims has the effect of enlisting the reader's sympathy and even occasional admiration for Simon. Perhaps the key to understanding this ambivalence is that our sympathy with Simon is relative to the depravity, foolishness, and pompousness of his victims, whereas on any more "absolute" scale of virtue Simon would be well worth sneering at. At any rate, it is certain that the author was unsympathetic with Simon's view of "book-larnin'" and culture if only because of the author's own literary interests and his library. Certainly there is a strong anti-intellectual element that is part of the tradition of horse-sense (common sense, mother-wit) American humor, and Simon fits this tradition perfectly when he rather heatedly expounds to himself:

"H-ll and scissors! Who ever seed the like of the books! Aint thar a pile! Do wonder what sort of

³Walter Blair, *Horse Sense in American Humor* (New York, 1962), 104-5.

a office them fellers in thar keeps, makes 'em want so many! They don't read 'em *all*, I judge! Well mother-wit kin beat book-larnin', at any game! Thar's 'squire Hadenskelt up home, he's got two cart-loads of law books — tho' that's no tech to this feller's — and here's what knocked a fifty outen him once, at short cards, afore a right smart, active sheep could flop his tail *ary* time; and kin do it agin, whenever he gits over his shyness! Human natur' and the human family is *my* books, and I've never seed many but what I could hold my own with. Let me git one o' these book-larnt fellers over a bottle of 'old corn,' and a handful of the dokkuments, and I'm d-d apt to get what he knows, and in a ginral way gives him a wrinkle into the bargain! Books aint fitten for nothin' but jist to give to child'en goin' to school, to keep em outen mischief. As old Jed'diah used to say, book-larnin spiles a man if he's got mother-wit and if he aint got that it don't do him no good--." (pp. 49-50)

Simon's comment about books being only good for keeping children out of mischief exemplifies the view of many parents that schoolmasters were little more than a necessary evil. Schoolteachers also get rough treatment in Longstreet, Baldwin, and of course Twain's *Tom Sawyer*, while Simon's general diatribe against academia is echoed by William T. Thompson's Major Jones in *Major Jones' Chronicles of Pineville* and Harris' Sut Lovingood in *Sut Lovingood Tales*.

There are a number of other motifs in Hooper's humor that at least deserve mention. The camp-meeting scene is related to other confrontations between rogues and clergymen going back as far as *Lazarillo de Tormes*, and precisely the same can be said of Simon's opening episode with his father, the Reverend Suggs. These scenes also have an American ancestor in *Modern Chivalry*, and Twain's camp-meeting in *Huckleberry Finn* is a direct descendant of Hooper's chapter. Other motifs that were more contemporary with Hooper's humor included that of the ugly man, which was essentially a tall tale centered around a man's fortunes and misfortunes due to his ugliness, a trait in which he took a rather bizarre pride. Quite likely Hooper's story "A Night at the Ugly Man's" is the epitome of this motif, but

it is at least worth noting that Simon in *Simon Suggs* is no paragon of beauty:

His head is somewhat large. . . . His forehead is divided into a couple of very acute triangles, the base of each of which is an eyebrow, lightly defined, and seeming to owe its scantiness to the depilatory assistance of a pair of tweezers. Beneath these almost shrubless cliffs, a pair of eyes with light-grey pupils and variegated whites, dance and twinkle in an aqueous humor which is constantly distilling from the corners. Lids without lashes complete the optical apparatus of Captain Suggs. . . . The nose we find in the neighborhood of these eyes, is long and low, with an extremity of singular acuteness, overhanging the subjacent mouth. . . . But the mouth of Captain Suggs is his great feature, and measures about four inches horizontally. . . . All these facial beauties are supported by a long and skinny, but muscular neck. (pp. 6-7)

It is possible, in keeping with the satire, to see something of Andrew Jackson here, or possibly Hooper himself, who had a reputation for ugliness in his own right. Other motifs Hooper uses include that of the dirt-eater, and although the most famous example is Longstreet's Ransy Sniffle, it is interesting that Hooper's "Yaller Legs," though not a particularly well-developed character, is the only character in *Simon Suggs* who sees Simon for what he really is — a con man. What this fact suggests, if anything, is unclear, but perhaps as an outcast from society the dirt-eater might possess a more realistic viewpoint on that society, its individuals, and its hypocrisy. A final motif Hooper uses is that of the horse-swap, which is almost ubiquitous in Southwestern humor, though the more famous examples are in Longstreet's *Georgia Scenes* and Twain's *Roughing It*.

Though not a motif, comic irony is a language-related aspect of Hooper's humor that deserves mention. Pervading the book, at least regarding its political point, is the fact that as a campaign biography it should reveal the virtues of the subject and his fitness for office; instead it reveals the amorality and general unfitness for office of the hero. More specific examples

of irony are numerous; for example when the candidate for bank director assumes that Simon is the legislator travelling incognito, he says in a cleverly understanding fashion, "There are many reasons why gentlemen of distinction should at times desire to travel without being known," to which Simon mentally replies, "'I'll be d--d if thar ain't!'" (p. 45). Or there is Simon's seeming suspicion of James Peyton's claim to be Suggs' nephew: "'All very will, Mr. Jeems Peyton, but as this little world of owrn is tolloble d--d full of rascally impostory; and gentlemen of my — that is to say — you see — persons that have got somethin', is apt to be tuk in, it stands a man in hand to be a leetle perticler'" (p. 55). Undoubtedly as humorous as any example of the book's ironies, though, is the obvious ability of Simon to impress his victims with his honesty. After the candidate for bank director asks Simon to use his supposed influence on the former's behalf, Simon replies "with an almost tragic air":

"Look me in the eye!"

The candidate looked steadily, for two seconds, in Simon's tearful eye.

"You see honesty thar — don't you?"

"I do!" said the candidate with emotion. (p. 46)

Of course, not once does Simon perform a thoroughly honest act throughout the novel. Exactly the same kind of irony is seen in his frequent weeping — Simon never cries from real emotion — and from his "magnanimity" — his seeming sacrifices only disguise his gain and endear him to the victims who are so foolishly suckered in.

RICHMOND P. HOBSON AND THE SINKING OF THE *MERRIMAC*

by

Walter E. Pittman, Jr.

The Spanish American War was the last war of heroes. The "bully little war" rode on a wave of public approval and enthusiasm that glorified the fighting man lucky enough to catch the eye of newspaper reporters. It had been a long time since the Civil War; the horrors had been long forgotten and the nation hungered for new heroes. Americans eagerly followed the little war's daily progress in their newspapers, vicariously living the adventures of which they read. Obscure warriors, professional and amateur, were suddenly catapulted to fame and fortune by the magic of newsprint. Sampson, Wheeler, Schley, Dewey, and Roosevelt were all rewarded for their successful exploits with public adulation and went onto build impressive careers based upon their war-won successes. Yet, at the time, it was a military failure that most captured the public's fancy, for Lieutenant Richmond Pearson Hobson and his tiny crew failed in their efforts to scuttle the collier *Merrimac* across Santiago harbor entrance and trap the Spanish fleet within. Nevertheless, the incident made an international hero of Hobson and propelled the Alabamian into national politics.

Fleet is perhaps too strong a word to use to describe the Spanish naval forces in the Caribbean, for the force under Admiral Pascual Cervera y Topete consisted of three modern torpedo boat destroyers, three dilapidated armored cruisers (*Maria Theresa*, *Reina Mercedes* and *Oquendo*) and one new armored cruiser (*Cristobol Colon*) which still lacked its main battery. Admiral Cervera had warned his government of the inevitable fate awaiting his weak force of ramshackle vessels supplied with defective ammunition, but Spanish honor had to be served. On April 29, 1898, the little squadron sailed from the Cape Verde Islands and into history at six knots.¹

¹Winfield Scott Schley, *Forty-Five Years Under The Flag* (New York, 1904) 273-385; Robley B. Evans, *A Sailors Log* (n.p., n.d.), 426-432; A. G. M. Azov, *Signal 250!*; *The Sea Fight off Santiago* (New York, 1964), 72-104; Walter Millis, *The Martial Spirit* (Cambridge, Mass., 1931), 228-239.

Concentrating to meet Cervera, the American naval forces were vastly more powerful. Four new battleships, the *Oregon*, *Indiana*, *Massachusetts* and *Iowa*, and one older, the *Texas*, awaited. The fast armored cruisers, *New York* and *Brooklyn*, and the armed yacht *Gloucester*, besides numerous scout cruisers, auxiliaries, and press boats also eagerly sought sight of Spanish masts. But Cervera won the first round; he reached Cuba safely despite his lack of charts of American waters and despite the efforts of the United States Navy.

While Cervera had been plodding across the Atlantic, the American Navy had been engaged in an incredible series of wild goose chases. Public opinion, panicking at the prospect of Spanish men-of-war sailing up every body of water capable of floating a dinghy, forced the government to disperse its naval forces all along the East Coast. The frightened citizens and their political leaders demanded protection — tangible protection that they could actually see in their own harbors. Scattered, the naval forces were nearly useless. But public opinion had to be served. The Navy finally distributed enough obsolete monitors and reserve ships along the coastline to free Commodore Winfield Scott Schley's "Flying Squadron" for offensive operations and at the same time to calm the civilian hysteria. But Schley was not allowed to leave Hampton Roads until Cervera had been definitely reported in West Indian waters. Even then, confusion within the American command resulted in neither Santiago nor Havana being adequately patrolled and Cervera slipped into Santiago unscathed and undetected on May 19, 1898. Although clearly visible from outside the harbor, Cervera's squadron was not discovered by Commodore Schley's force until May 29. Even then, the dilatory American commander did nothing until May 31, when he undertook a half-hearted bombardment of the *Cristobal Colon* from outside effective range. Admiral Sampson arrived and took command the same day.²

The problems facing Sampson were immense. The Spanish fleet was anchored in the large mushroom shaped harbor of Santiago where it was protected by the narrow harbor entrance through which the channel wound its tortuous course under dominating cliffs. To enhance the natural obstacles,

²Schley, *Forty-Five Years Under the Flag*, 263-283; Evans, *A Sailor's Log*, 430-432.

heavy fortification and electrically detonated mines had been emplaced by the Spanish. There were not enough mines or modern artillery, but Santiago Harbor was a formidable military obstacle and the Americans were unaware of the Spanish weaknesses.³

Even before leaving Key West, Admiral Sampson began planning to neutralize Cervera's fleet. For despite its weakness the Spanish force with its superior squadron speed could possibly elude the superior American forces if Cervera chose to sorty. Arriving off Santiago, Sampson established a close blockade of the harbor entrance. At night the battleships illuminated the harbor entrance with their searchlights at close range. By day the fleet took on provisions and coal without ever leaving station. But if Cervera could not get out of Santiago, Sampson could not get in, and the resulting stalemate which tied down large American naval forces was unsatisfying to the offensive-minded Americans.⁴

Even before leaving Key West, Sampson began to consider the possibility of bottling up Cervera's force by blocking the entrance to Santiago Harbor. A later investigation ordered by President William H. Taft was unable to determine who deserved credit for originating the idea but it was probably Sampson. The channel was narrow enough and shallow enough that a ship sunk across it could effectively close it and bottle up Cervera's fleet indefinitely. As early as May 31, Sampson ordered Schley to sink the collier *Sterling* in the harbor entrance but the latter failed to do so under the discretionary authority Sampson had given him.⁵ Selecting the collier *Merrimac*, Samp-

³Rear-Admiral Pluddermann, German Navy, "Comments of Rear Admiral Pluddermann," Translated by the Office of Naval Intelligence, *Notes on The Spanish-American War*, No. II, 56th Cong., 1st Sess., Senate Doc. No. 388 (Washington, 1900), 12, 21, 22. Hereafter cited as O.N.I., *War Notes*.

⁴Commodore W. S. Schley to the Secretary of the Navy, June 11, 1898, Navy Department Records, National Archives; William T. Sampson, "Memo Number 15," *ibid.*; William T. Sampson, "The Atlantic Fleet in the Spanish War," *Century*, LVII (April, 1899), 889-899.

⁵Memorandum to William H. Taft, January 10, 1913, William Howard Taft Papers, Library of Congress; Schley, *Forty-Five Years Under The Flag*, 285; Rear Admiral William T. Sampson to the Secretary of the Navy, June 3, 1898, in, "Appendix to the Report of the Chief of the Bureau of Navigation," *Annual Reports of the Navy Department for the Year 1898*, 55th, Cong., 3rd Sess., House Document No. 3 (Washington, 1898), 437.

son ordered Assistant Naval Constructor Richmond Pearson Hobson to begin planning the operation. The selection of the *Merrimac* was probably not entirely fortuitous. For several weeks it had bedeviled fleet operations with chronic engine trouble.⁶

The choice of Hobson was not entirely fortuitous either. Hobson had aggressively sought active service with the Fleet. Trained in France as a naval architect after graduating first in his class at Annapolis, Hobson had been assigned as a Naval Constructor in various capacities and was theoretically not eligible for sea duty. But ambition burned within the young Alabamian. When war came, he had first convinced the Navy Department that a Naval Constructor should accompany the fleet in battle to observe the stability of warships in action. Then he convinced them that he was the obvious one to go. Already Hobson was well known within the service. Scion of an aristocratic Greensboro, Alabama family, Hobson had had a distinguished academic career and a promising naval future. While at Annapolis an unusual situation developed which tells much about Hobson's character. Under the strict honor system of the Academy, he was meticulous in reporting fellow midshipmen for infractions of the rules. As a result, he was ostracized by the student body and it is reported that only one student spoke to him in a period of two years. When his fellow cadets finally tired of their game and offered the hand of friendship, Hobson refused to cooperate and continued to graduation in 1889, proud, lonely, and at the head of his class. His naval career before 1898, included post-graduate work in Europe, instruction at Annapolis, and technical assignments with the Bureau of Ships and various shipyards. Hobson was also sent as a naval observer to the Far East on two occasions. What he saw profoundly affected him and in later years Hobson would emerge as the leading anti-Japanese spokesman in the nation. War with Spain in 1898 offered a chance of glory and excitement and Hobson was quick to take advantage of it. Even before Santiago he had volunteered for several hazardous enterprises that had not come to fruition.⁷

⁶Evans, *A Sailor's Log*, 429; Schley, *Forty-Five Years Under The Flag*, 275.

⁷Walter E. Pittman, Jr., "Richmond P. Hobson, Crusader," Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Georgia, 1968, 1-8.

Hobson's planning for scuttling the *Merrimac* was complicated by the necessity for speed. Hobson in the *Oregon* arrived off Santiago early June 1. Moon and tide conditions dictated that the best available opportunity would be early June 2, when flood tide would coincide with a period of darkness between moonset and daybreak. A shorter period would be available the next morning. Lack of time and resources required that less than ideal means be used to sink the collier. Hobson finally determined to use ten torpedoes, electrically detonated. Each torpedo (the word torpedo then referred to any underwater explosive) consisted of a normal eight-inch charge of seventy-eight pounds of brown prismatic powder with four pounds of black powder used as a detonator. The charges were to be placed along the port side below the waterline and in a position where they would serve to breach the watertight bulkheads. The charges were to be waterproofed in their own metal tanks with the firing cables and detonators inserted and to be secured by a belt line fore and aft and by a girth line completely around the ship. Hobson figured correctly that the lack of transverse bulkheads would cause the collier to sink upright, thus more effectively blocking the channel and facilitating the crew's escape.⁸

As the *Merrimac's* 333 feet length was barely sufficient to block the 350 to 450 foot channel, it would be necessary to swing the ship across the channel and hold her there. But it was also necessary to approach the entrance at high speed to minimize detection. This meant there was only a short distance available in which to slow, turn and sink the vessel. Hobson's final plan, as approved by Sampson, called for the *Merrimac* to approach the channel at full speed, cut of power outside the entrance and allow the ship's momentum to carry it into the mouth of the harbor. At this point its speed should be about four and one half knots. Then "the helm would be put hard aport" and when the ship began to swing, first the starboard bow-anchor with sixty fathoms of chain would be let to and then the starboard stern-anchor with forty fathoms of chain. Both anchor chains would be laid out on deck and rigged with elastic rope stops to take up as much momentum as possible. The stops, which were short pieces of rope, were tied to the anchor chains at one end and to a heavy hawser at the other. As the

⁸Richmond P. Hobson, *The Sinking of The Merrimac* (New York, 1899), 8-18.

chain was run out it would break each stop in turn but not until a portion of the ship's momentum had been neutralized by the elasticity of the hawser and the stops. Hopefully, the dragging anchors and the elastic stops would slow the ship enough to sink it in the desired location. When the narrowest part of the channel was readied the torpedoes would be fired as the ship turned to starboard and its forward motion would help flood the holes on the port side. Any additional momentum should be neutralized by sticking the ship's nose into the mud on the side of the channel. The crew could then escape by small boat.⁹

Hobson's plan required only a small crew to detonate the torpedoes and release the anchor fastenings. He was in command, having convinced Admiral Sampson that he should take the collier in rather than her skipper, Captain James Miller, who vigorously protested his replacement. The rest of the crew were chosen from volunteers from the fleet. Signals went out from the flagship for volunteers but this plan failed when the entire ship's companies of each ship volunteered. Finally, seven enlisted men were selected to accompany Hobson; George Phillips, Francis Kelly, and Osborn Deignan of the *Merrimac*; George Charette, Daniel Montague and Randolph Clausen of the *New York*; and J. E. Murphy who was elected by the crew of the *Iowa* to represent them. Originally Boatswain Mullen of the *New York* was selected to go, but he worked himself to exhaustion preparing the *Merrimac* and had to be replaced. Many junior officers, some his former students at Annapolis, begged futilely to accompany Hobson.¹⁰

The preparation of the *Merrimac* proved arduous. Mass confusion reigned on board where stripping parties and work gangs stumbled over one another. Coal had to be shifted, watertight doors removed, charges prepared and anchors rigged. Stripping parties carried off needed supplies and the heat and the normal blockade routine interfered with effective work. It proved impossible to shift the large anchor aft and a lesser one had to be used. The failure to locate an electrical detonating machine proved a more serious problem. Batteries had to be used instead, but there proved to be an insufficient number

⁹*Ibid.*, 21-22.

¹⁰*Ibid.* 40-44, 54-55, 73-74; Evans, *A Sailor's Log*, 439.

of these also. Finally, enough batteries were found to detonate six of the ten charges and the most important ones were selected. The reliability of even these batteries was questionable.¹¹

Delayed when a launch fouled one of its lines, the *Merrimac* approached the entrance just at dawn on June 2, 1898. Admiral Sampson was alarmed at the visibility afforded the Spanish and ordered the mission's recall, much to Hobson's chagrin. In fact, Hobson later admitted that he came close to disobeying but finally turned back, reluctantly. He was afraid he would not get another opportunity. Too tense to rest, adrift in the hot sun and without food most of the day, Hobson's little crew spent a miserable day awaiting their next chance. Darkness and the imminence of action refreshed them. One change, critical as it proved, was made. An attempt to tow a lifeboat as a means of escape had failed on June 2, when it had capsized and broken loose. Instead, a boat was put on the deck of the collier and as an afterthought a catamaran was added.¹²

The crew of the *Merrimac* began their journey into history about 1:30 A.M., June 3, 1898, after a leisurely midnight breakfast of sandwiches and coffee. More batteries had been located but three of the mines had in the meantime failed to respond to test, probably because of a leak. Of the remaining seven each was given its own firing circuit to insure as many detonations as possible. The men were spread throughout the ship and each had a preliminary function assigned before he was to explode his torpedo. Cockswain J. E. Murphy of the *Iowa* had the most hazardous test. First, he was to cut loose the tow anchor with an axe, then in the darkness make his way across the narrow forecastle dodging the rushing chain and breaking hawsers while fully exposed to enemy fire. Arriving portside, Murphy was to detonate his torpedo which was alongside the collision bulkhead, directly beneath himself. The others had similar, if less dangerous, jobs except for Hobson and Deignan, the helmsman, who would remain on the bridge. The men stripped to their long underwear and each wore a life jacket and pistol belt.

¹¹Captain James Miller to the Secretary of the Navy, June 6, 1898, Navy Dept. Records, National Archives; Hobson, *The Sinking of the Merrimac*, 35-40, 45-56.

¹²Hobson, *The Sinking of the Merrimac*, 57-62; Rear Admiral William T. Sampson to the Secretary of the Navy, June 3, 1898, in "Appendix to the Report of the Bureau of Navigation," *Annual Reports of The Navy Department for the year 1898*, 55th Cong., 3rd Sess., House Document No. 3 (Washington, 1898), 437.

They were connected to the bridge with ropes secured to their wrists and signals were prearranged. A launch from the *New York* followed to look for survivors near the harbor entrance after the event.¹³

Hobson expected to be detected from Morro Castle on the east side of the channel when he came within 2,000 yards. In the predawn darkness the lumbering collier actually got within 400 yards of the entrance before it was discovered and fired upon by a small picket boat which coolly concentrated its quick firing guns on the exposed rudder of the *Merrimac*. Other heavier batteries joined in with an indescribable din. So many hits were registered that the clash of steel on steel was almost constant. But Hobson's little crew held steadily to their tasks. The double bottom having already been flooded, the seacocks were opened at the proper moment, and Hobson ordered the first torpedoes detonated. Without waiting for a response he then ordered the final turn to starboard. The ship failed to respond and plowed blithely straight down the channel at six knots. The survivors later determined that the steering had been shot away not in one, but in three different places.¹⁴

Amid the noise of the heavy Spanish fire, which was now general, Hobson ordered the remaining torpedoes fired. Only two torpedoes responded and these were insufficient to sink the ship quickly enough to lodge it in the narrow part of the channel. The ground tackle proved incapable of stopping the 7,000 ton *Merrimac* moving at six knots and both anchors tore loose. The ship continued to move with the tide into the inner harbor under increasing Spanish fire. The ship was hit literally hundreds of times, primarily by light quick firing weapons. At least ten remote controlled mines were also detonated, one of which damaged the *Merrimac*. This left only four mines in the Spanish defense field had Sampson known and dared the entrance. The Spanish fire was so intense that they took heavy casualties from their own "overs." Spanish officers later told Hobson they lost fourteen dead and thirty-seven wounded to what they believed to be an armored cruiser. The *Reina Mercedes* and destroyer *Pluton* each fired two auto-

¹³*Ibid.*, 57-88.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 90-101; Captain Victor M. Concas Y. Palau, "The Squadron of Admiral Cervera," O.N.I., *War Notes*, 1-117.

mobile torpedoes at the *Merrimac* but Hopson reported no hits.¹⁵

Somehow in this incredible crossfire the crew of the *Merrimac* remained untouched save for one cut lip. Crowding in a small circle on deck, they rode the slowly sinking ship to its grave, well inside the harbor entrance where it came to rest with just the extreme upperworks above water and where it offered no real obstacle to navigation. Although banged around by the rush of water as the ship sank, Hobson and his crew were again unhurt and found cover on the surface by clinging to the catamaran, which was still tied to the sunken *Merrimac* and which capsized as the larger vessel had sunk.¹⁶

For about an hour, until daybreak, the men clung to the bottom of the catamaran in the uncomfortably cold water. Then in the early daylight they saw a canvas covered steam launch approaching them. Hobson, trapped in broad daylight in an enemy anchorage, decided to save his crew by surrender and as the launch approached, he swam out to it. He was pulled aboard by the squad of soldiers on the launch and to his amazement found himself before Admiral Cervera himself. The Admiral's first words were of praise for the courage of Hobson and his crew ("valiente, valiente") and he treated the Americans with Old World courtesy. At first held by the Spanish Navy, they were later turned over to the Army and held ashore.¹⁷

The conditions of Hobson's imprisonment seem almost unbelievable to those accustomed to the horrors of modern war. Cervera and his officers treated Hobson and his men as honored guests. Word was sent out to Admiral Sampson of their fate and personal belongings were brought back to them. Hobson himself was lionized by the Spanish who regarded him as a hero and who often traveled miles just to meet him. Admiral

¹⁵Rear Admiral Pascual Cervera Y Topete, "A Collection of Documents Relative to the Squadron Operations in the West Indies," O.N.I., *War Notes* No. VII, 100; Rear Admiral Pluddermann, "Comments of Rear-Admiral Pluddermann, German Navy," O.N.I., *War Notes*, No. II, 12; Hobson, *The Sinking of The Merrimac*, 92-112, 160.

¹⁶Hobson, *The Sinking of The Merrimac*, 110-115.

¹⁷Miss Margaret Hobson, sister of Richmond P. Hobson, personal interview with the author at Magnolia Grove, Greensboro, Alabama, January 20, 1961; Hobson, *The Sinking of The Merrimac*, 116-220; Captain Francis J. Higginson to the Commander in Chief, U. S. Naval Forces, North Atlantic Station, June 6, 1898, Navy Dept. Records, National Archives.

Cervera, himself, visited Hobson and the two became friends and corresponded frequently until the Admiral's death in 1910. In his confinement Hobson was given almost anything he desired and he was not reluctant to take advantage of it. He became an instant world celebrity and while in prison not only corresponded freely but even sent and received telegrams.¹⁸

Hobson and his crew were exchanged after the destruction of Cervera's fleet and reached American lines to find themselves famous. Although the glories of higher ranking officers such as Dewey and Roosevelt eclipsed some of their fame and proved more enduring, the crew of the *Merrimac* were the popular heroes of the hour. Perceiving his propaganda value, Hobson was sent by the Navy on a national tour and he was mobbed in city after city, particularly by young ladies who insisted on kissing him. A popular candy quickly reached the market known as "Hobson's Kisses." The crew, except Hobson, was each awarded the Medal of Honor. It was not then customary to award the medal to officers.¹⁹

Hobson retired on medical grounds from the Navy in 1903, and entered politics, primarily to strengthen his beloved Navy. His fame, fine appearance, and exceptional speaking abilities assured electoral success. Serving in Congress from 1906 to 1914, Hobson quickly emerged as the nation's leading advocate of naval armaments and publicizer of the "yellow peril," the Japanese menace. He became, and remained, the voice of the Navy on Capitol Hill. He also introduced the first Prohibition Amendment and was one of the most important leaders in that reform movement. An effective speaker, Hobson was also one of the nation's most popular Chautauqua lecturers even outdrawing the well-known William Jennings Bryan. Defeated in a race for the Senate in 1914, Hobson retired from politics and turned his attention to Prohibition and later to the international movement to control narcotics. In 1933, Hobson, who was suffering financially, was made Rear Admiral (retired) and awarded

¹⁸Lt. Jose Muller Y. Tejeiro, "Battles and Capitulations of Santiago de Cuba", O.N.I., *War Notes No. 1*, *passim*; Hobson, *The Sinking of The Merrimac*, 124-286; *Daily Times* (Chattanooga), February 17, 1910; *Diario De Cadiz* January 19, 1910.

¹⁹Scrapbook of newspaper clippings at Magnolia Grove, Greensboro, Alabama; *New York Times*, January 8, 1899; *San Francisco Examiner*, December 23, 1898, December 24, 1898.

the Medal of Honor by a special act of Congress. Afterwards he always seemed prouder of being called Admiral than Congressman. When death came in 1937, Hobson was once more on the lecture circuit vainly urging naval preparedness upon his reluctant nation and warning of coming Japanese aggression. He was buried in Arlington National Cemetery on a cold and snowy morning with a Navy and Marine escort to the strains of "Lead Kindly Light."

RECONSTRUCTION POLITICS AND THE MILITARY: THE EUFAULA RIOT OF 1874

by

Melinda M. Hennessey

In his book on the United States Army during Reconstruction, historian James E. Sefton is careful to point out that the presence of federal troops in a particular area of the South during elections was no guarantee that the Republican party would do well. In fact he finds that there is no reason to assume that the stationing of United States soldiers changed the political results or that there was any correlation between troop sites and election outcomes.¹ The futility of the hope that the federal army would protect Republicans, black and white, was nowhere more apparent than in Barbour County, Alabama, in the November election of 1874. The events of election day gave bloody testimony to the abandonment of southern Republicans to their own meager devices against the overwhelming and increasingly impatient white Democracy.

Alabama was redeemed in 1874 following a strenuous effort by the state's white Conservatives. In 1870 the Democrats, in a very close election, had recaptured the governorship in what Horace Mann Bond has described as "A Democratic Interlude."² Consequently, the loss of the governor's chair to Republican David P. Lewis in 1872 was a stunning defeat for Democrats, and they were determined to sweep the state in 1874.³ The struggle for control of Barbour County mirrored the efforts between the two parties throughout Alabama, and in many ways Elias M. Keils personified the battle as it emerged in 1874. Keils was fifty-four, an Alabama native, and a Eufaula resident since 1837. After the war Keils became a tireless worker in the Republican party and in March 1870 was elected judge of the city court.⁴

¹James Sefton, *The U. S. Army and Reconstruction, 1865-1877* (Baton Rouge, 1967), 30, 233.

²Horace Mann Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama: A Study in Cotton and Steel* (Kingsport, Tennessee, 1939; reprint ed., New York, 1969), 67.

³*Ibid.*, 68-69; Walter L. Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama* (New York, 1905), 754-755.

⁴*Report on the Alabama Election of 1874*, House Reports, no. 262, 43rd Cong.,

The marketing center of Barbour County, Eufaula, with its high cliffs and surrounding streams, lay on the eastern boundary of the state across the Chattahoochee River from Georgia. Just beneath Alabama's Black Belt, the county was in the Wiregrass section, part of the lower coastal plain. Although the sandy soil of the region precluded the widespread plantation economy of the fecund Black Belt, Barbour County was almost sixty per cent black, and just over half of Eufaula's 3200 residents were Negroes.⁵ During Reconstruction Democrats managed to control the Eufaula elections, but they were repeatedly defeated in the county contests. The only reason Keils was able to win as judge of the city court, a body established in 1866 to handle the increased case loads between freedmen and whites which emancipation brought, was that the balloting for the position was county-wide. Spurred by their vigorous effort in 1872 which resulted in a lessened Republican majority, Democrats increasingly attacked Judge Keils. Denying charges of unfairly protecting guilty Negroes and of acquitting his political allies, Keils in turn accused Democrats of intimidating blacks.⁶

Events in 1874 did nothing to improve the tense political mood in Eufaula. In a local election in February, shots were fired between whites and blacks, to the alarm of both races. In April a group of fifty Eufaula residents, including men from both parties, issued an address condemning Judge Keils for slandering the county in an earlier grand jury charge and blaming him for instigating the racial bitterness which led to the February clash. The formation of the White Man's Club of Eufaula in August signaled a new tactic in Democratic efforts to defeat the Republicans. If white Democrats lacked political control of their former slaves, they still enjoyed an even more basic power over the freedmen, for the economic

2nd Sess. (Washington, 1875), 1; hereafter cited as House Report no. 262; *Report on the Election in Alabama*, Senate Reports, no. 704, 44th Cong., 2nd Sess. (Washington, 1877), 588-589; hereafter cited as Senate Report no. 704; Harry P. Owens, "The Eufaula Riot of 1874," *Alabama Review*, XVI (July 1963), 226-227; Anne Kendrick Walker, *Backtracking in Barbour County: A Narrative of the Last Alabama Frontier* (Richmond, 1941), 253.

⁵Owens, "The Eufaula Riot," 224; Bond, *Negro Education*, 3; *A Compendium of the Ninth Census* (Washington, 1872), 24-25; *Ninth Census, Vol. 1: The Statistics of the Population of the United States* (Washington, 1872), 77; Walker, *Backtracking*, 85.

⁶Owens, "The Eufaula Riot," 224-230 *passim*.

life of most blacks remained tied to their former masters. Throughout the campaign prior to the November election, Democrats held pledge meetings in Eufaula. Blacks were expected to swear under oath that they would support the Democratic party or they would find no work, and many of Eufaula's blacks felt this economic pressure.⁷

Even the Republican county nominating convention which met in August in Clayton, the county seat, gave further indication of the torrid political atmosphere. A handful of blacks outside of the courthouse began arguing over the closing of convention doors inside, which Republicans claimed was necessary because of the Democratic habit of bursting in on Republican gatherings. The appearance of armed whites turned the crowd even uglier, and a nervous black Republican leader from Eufaula, Aleck E. Williams, sent a note in to Keils and the other convention delegates warning them of the threatening situation developing around the courthouse. Hurriedly, the Republicans concluded their business and adjourned to the outskirts of the town, where they issued their nominations in more peaceful surroundings than the courthouse, the customary site of such announcements.⁸

Another tactic vigorously employed by Democrats was ostracism of white Republicans. Certainly this was not a new maneuver, but the 1874 election caused it to be used more stringently and even as official policy in some areas. Apparently northerners were not snubbed when they first moved to Alabama after the war, but the organization of the Republican party in the state in the summer of 1867 caused a change in their treatment by the state's whites. In June 1874 the Democratic convention in neighboring Pike County adopted what came to be known as the Pike County Platform, a resolution ostracizing all who supported the Republican party in any fashion. This weapon might appear rather mild, and indeed, when compared to the violent methods also employed, it was. Probably ostracism was not insufferable to many northern Republicans who were newcomers, but to southern scalawags, who were hated most of all, the pain of being cut off from

⁷*Ibid.*, 230-231; House Report no. 262, 213-214, 804, 857-859, 983, 985; Walker, *Backtracking*, 254-260 *passim*.

⁸House Report no. 262, 1-2, 802, 982-983; Senate Report no. 704, 594.

former friends and associations could be deeply felt.⁹ Democrats claimed that white Republicans were not ostracized because of their politics, but because their association with Negroes prevented their being acceptable to proper southerners. In reality this racist argument was only part of the story. Deputy U. S. Marshal James D. Williford, a native southerner who was in Eufaula on the day of the riot and who later served warrants on some whites as his job required, found that on his return to his boarding house in Montgomery after the arrests, he was treated so coldly he was forced to move. Williford believed the snubs by whites were due entirely to his job with the United States government. Dr. Z. T. Daniel, a twenty-six-year-old Eufaula native, discovered that his Republicanism resulted in his having to leave the town. The young physician's father was a prominent Eufaula businessman, an alderman, a Mason, and a member of the Baptist Church. Although not a Republican, Daniel's father was a strong, independent man who publicly aided Republicans when he felt they had been wronged, and he suffered some loss of business and social chilliness because of it. The treatment of young Daniel was more severe, the social omissions more keenly felt because he was a bachelor, and the economic ostracism potent enough to force the doctor to move from Eufaula in search of a place where he could practice. Over a period of about a year and a half, the number of Dr. Daniel's patients steadily declined until he was no longer able to make a living in his hometown.¹⁰ Ostracism, according to Daniel, "operates in depriving a man of his business, in keeping him out of society; it makes his life disagreeable in nearly every respect. He received the contumely of the intelligent and the jeers of the ignorant."¹¹

The dangers inherent in the approaching election certainly were not ignored by Barbour County's leading Republican, Judge Keils. In August Keils wrote the Alabama attorney general, Benjamin Gardner, describing intimidation and bloodshed in Barbour County, asking Governor Lewis to declare martial law, and promising, "Mob law has prevailed long enough—I have made up my mind to take the Bull by the horns—The

⁹Sarah Woolfolk Wiggins, "Ostracism of White Republicans in Alabama During Reconstruction," *Alabama Review*, XXVII (January 1974), 52-56, 64; Fleming, *Civil War and Reconstruction*, 781.

¹⁰House Report no. 262, 428, 431-433, 846-847, 1063-1068.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 1064.

law shall punish the guilty—The law shall protect the innocent.” Referring to Keils as “an incendiary, or a fool,” the governor fired back an angry letter to the attorney general to be shown to Keils. Lewis denied he had the power to declare martial law and told Gardner to “advise him [Keils] to shut his mouth about my course.”¹² Undaunted, Keils continued to seek help, and three times in October he wrote about the impending election to the U. S. Marshal in Montgomery, General Robert W. Healy. In the letters Judge Keils recommended Negroes and whites to serve as grand jurors and election supervisors, but primarily the notes expressed the need for federal soldiers at polling places on election day. Keils emphasized the threatening activities of the White League, and in one of his letters he claimed that the League members were shipping into the county new breech-loading, double-barreled shotguns and ammunition, a charge he also made in a letter to U. S. Attorney General, George H. Williams.¹³

Judge Keils’s apprehensions were understandable in the crackling political atmosphere, but Barbour County blacks had no inclination to bow before white intimidation, and white leaders were aware of the Negroes’ determination. According to antebellum Congressman Eli Shorter, a Eufaula lawyer and planter and a recognized Democratic leader, “It is the hardest thing in the world to keep a negro away from the polls; that is the one thing he will do, to vote.”¹⁴ Not unmindful to the possibility of trouble, however, blacks planned to seek safety in numbers. On Monday night prior to the Tuesday election on November 3, hundreds of county and town blacks gathered and camped at various roadside sites four or five miles from Eufaula. They were joined by local black leaders, who fetched Republican election tickets with them to distribute and included Williams, Henry Frazer, a Methodist preacher, and Edward Odom, a

¹²E. M. Keils to Benjamin Gardner, August 25, 1874, and Governor David P. Lewis to Gardner, September 4, 1874, Governor David P. Lewis Papers, General Correspondence (Alabama State Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama).

¹³E. M. Keils to General R. W. Healy, October 2, 1874, and October 5, 1874, E. M. Keils, A. J. Laird, James Clark, G. W. Williams to Healy, October 21, 1874, House Report no. 262, 1268, 1274; E. M. Keils to Attorney General George H. Williams, October 2, 1874, U. S. Department of Justice, Source-Chronological Files, Record Group 60 (National Archives, Washington).

¹⁴House Report no. 262, 793, 800.

candidate for the state legislature. As election day dawned, the groups struck out for Eufaula in processions of two hundred to eight hundred.¹⁵

Repeatedly warned during the canvass by Keils and others to come unarmed to the polls to avoid the slightest excuse for white violence, the black men had few guns, and most of those were left at the campsites at the request of Negro leaders. The processions paraded over the dusty roads toward Eufaula, with many blacks carrying walking canes and sticks and others chewing on sugar cane. They were met just outside the town by white officials, including Deputy Marshal Williford and city policemen, who walked through the lines of blacks searching for weapons but finding none.¹⁶ The blacks had come to Eufaula en masse but with only a handful of guns, in effect disarmed by their leaders in an effort to preclude any white justification of violence. This would be only one of several miscalculations by Republican leaders.

Some of the polls were rather late in opening, but by 9:00 A.M. the balloting had begun in Eufaula's three polling places, all of which were less than two hundred feet apart on the same side of one of the town's main thoroughfares. Fifteen hundred blacks and considerably fewer whites milled around in the crowded streets, forming rough voting lines. Some voters were challenged, usually for being under age, and were carried away by officials. Around noon Deputy Marshal Williford and Democrat Shorter, sitting on the sidewalk on an overturned box, watched the balloting, which had slowed, and commented on the lack of serious difficulties. Then the two men noticed several blacks rush by and heard raised, angry voices. Pushing his way through the jammed street, Williford went to see if he could calm tempers.¹⁷

The argument was between Milas Lawrence, a Negro Republican, and Charles E. Goodwin, a white Democrat. Apparently, a young black tried to vote the Republican ticket and was challenged as too young, which he admitted to election

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 214, 217, 966-967, 979; Senate Report no. 704, 578, 583.

¹⁶House Report no. 262, 214-215, 218, 428, 793, 797, 803-804, 806, 808-809, 811, 813, 828-829, 849-850, 967, 979, 1063.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 215, 427, 794; Senate Report no. 704, 445.

officials. Then he was taken into an alley by whites and told to vote the Democratic ticket, and the frightened youngster agreed. As the group emerged from the alley, they were confronted by Lawrence, who demanded of the boy, "God damn you, are you going to vote the democratic ticket?" Goodwin replied, "God damn you, do you take it up?" Lawrence answered, "You are taking it up for your people, and I will take it up for mine." Another white, William Dowdy, yelled, "Shoot the damned son of a bitch," pulled his bowie knife, and stabbed Lawrence in the shoulder. By this time Williford had arrived at the center of the crowd and was trying to calm both sides. But Lawrence's wound was immediately followed by gunshots, first one and then many. Negroes later claimed that Goodwin fired a single pistol shot in the air as a signal for whites to open fire.¹⁸

It seems clear that if whites did not plan the riot, at the very least they were quite organized if trouble occurred. As guns cracked, the few whites in the crowd tried to flee immediately, and those remaining, mostly blacks, drew heavy fire from two directions. One area, directly over the polls, was offices of white professionals and a makeshift armory where an unofficial white militia kept weapons; the other was across the street, where whites lined up in orderly fashion and fired into the helpless blacks. With shots falling "like hail from the clouds,"¹⁹ the streets became scenes of chaotic flight as the unarmed Negroes fled in all directions in their efforts to avoid the bullets, while the whites continued their remorseless firing.²⁰ Aaron Hunter was shot twice while standing in front of the polls, and as he fled down an alley two whites, one a Eufaula policeman, unsuccessfully fired at him several times.²¹ Sitting on the sidewalk when the firing started, George Pinckney jumped up and began running, but was felled by a fatal bullet in his intestines.²² Toward the end of the riot, Ralph Grant was standing in front of a warehouse when whites ran by. He

¹⁸Eufaula *Times*, November 4, 1874, as quoted in *Mobile Daily Register*, November 7, 1874; House Report no. 262, 214, 218-219, 427, 801, 805, 809-813, 824, 830-831, 848-849, 967, 979; *New York Tribune*, November 4, 1874; Senate Report no. 704, 579, 583-585.

¹⁹House Report no. 262, 813.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 214-215, 427, 432, 813, 825-826, 830-831, 848, 967, 984; Senate Report no. 704, 554, 579, 584.

²¹House Report no. 262, 831.

²²*Ibid.*, 984-985.

raised his arms and asked not to be shot, but to no avail.²³ Not surprisingly, several whites were unable to avoid the gunfire, and Henry Shorter, Eli Shorter's brother who was also a staunch Democrat, received a bullet in the arm as he stood on the sidewalk.²⁴

As the echoes of gunshots faded, a shout was heard: "Fall in Company A; fall in Company B." Two squads of heavily armed whites responded to the order, carrying shotguns, U. S. Army muskets, and Army regulation Smith & Wesson .44s.²⁵ The leader of this group was Alpheus Baker, a former Confederate brigadier general and a Eufaula lawyer, who was running against Keils for judge of the city court. He addressed the crowd from atop a box, admonished them to hold their positions, and joined with the wounded Shorter in commencing a victory celebration by "throwing up their beavers." Other whites joined, hollering and bragging, "Let the Yankees come. We are ready for them."²⁶

The Yankees referred to were a detachment of the Second United States Infantry, ten enlisted men stationed in Eufaula under the command of Captain A. S. Daggett. There was absolutely no likelihood, however, that a confrontation between the whites and the troops would occur, for the commander of the Department of the South, General Irwin McDowell, had issued orders forbidding interference by federal troops in any but the most limited circumstances. On October 20, 1874, from McDowell's headquarters in Louisville, Kentucky, came General Orders No. 75, in which the activities of the troops were severely circumscribed. In effect the uses to which the Army could be put were to aid civil authorities in enforcing writs of United States courts and to protect Internal Revenue Department agents in enforcing revenue laws. The orders concluded by rescinding a circular of April 3, 1871, and General Orders No. 54. The circular instructed local officers to aid

²³*Ibid.*, 822.

²⁴*Ibid.*, 427.

²⁵*Ibid.*, 427, 821-822, 830-831, 968, 1278; Senate Report no. 704, 445, 554, 585; Robert W. Healy to Attorney General George H. Williams, November 4, 1874, Dept. of Justice, RG 60.

²⁶Owens, "Eufaula Riot," 235; Mattie Thomas Thompson, *History of Barbour County, Alabama*, (Eufaula, Alabama, 1939), 335-337; House Report no. 262, 821-822, 827, 831; Senate Report no. 704, 586.

U. S. marshals when help was requested and to serve as a part of a *posse comitatus* in legitimate requests by civil authorities. The cancellation of General Orders No. 54 made the intent of the new directive even clearer, for it read: "By the common law every citizen, armed or unarmed, has a right to interfere to prevent the commission of a felony or the felonious destruction of life or property."²⁷ The practical implications of General Orders No. 75 were vividly evident on election day in Alabama.

Captain Daggett grew increasingly concerned as the election neared for he heard repeated statements by whites that they were prepared and would not be driven from the polls by Negroes. Uncertain as to the application of the new orders, he instructed his lieutenants in cases of absolute necessity to assist sheriffs as a *posse comitatus* and to station their men "within a reasonable distance of the polls." He telegraphed these actions to General McDowell to be sure he was acting within his orders. McDowell's response was pointed, "No; you are not right. General Orders No. 75 fully sets forth your duty. You are stationed at Eufaula to aid United States civil officers to execute processes of United States courts." Daggett had no choice but to cancel his earlier instructions to his lieutenants.²⁸ Unable to use his soldiers on election day, Daggett helplessly watched the Eufaula riot from a hotel window fifty yards away. As soon as the firing subsided, Deputy Marshall Williford sought out Daggett and asked for assistance. Daggett refused, showing him General McDowell's telegram. Williford then requested assistance in serving subpoenas on those involved to prevent their causing further trouble, but Daggett did not feel that subpoenas were writs, the only thing his orders allowed him to become involved with, and he began looking in his dictionary for clarification. Williford was stunned, "Colonel, they will burn the town and kill everybody else." The frustrated captain replied, "Very well; I cannot help it if they do; I cannot give any assistance under my orders." Deciding on a new tactic, Williford replied that his duty was to serve the subpoenas, and since it was unsafe to serve them, he requested troops to help him. Again Daggett refused but

²⁷House Report no. 262, 25, 81; *Report on Troops in Alabama*, House Executive Documents, no. 110, 43rd Cong., 2nd Sess., (Washington, 1875), 2.

²⁸House Report no. 262, 598.

offered to find each of the men on the list personally and "notify them to meet you at a certain point that you may serve them there." An incredulous Williford snapped, "Well, captain, this is a queer way for me to do business," and walked out.²⁹

Fortunately, the Eufaula riot was over so Daggett's response was not the cause for more casualties. One of his lieutenants, William J. Turner, was just facing the tragedy of General Orders No. 75, however. With a detachment of ten men, Lieutenant Turner drew election duty at Spring Hill, a polling place in Barbour County about eighteen miles from Eufaula. The election supervisor there was Judge Keils, who was accompanied by his sixteen-year-old son, Willie. Voting was peaceful until 11:00 A.M., when random gunfire was heard, followed by a rush of forty or fifty Democrats to a vacant storehouse, where they retrieved hidden shotguns. These whites paraded the rest of the day and as the poll closing time of 5:00 P.M. neared, the mood grew ominous. Some time after 4:00 young Keils visited Lieutenant Turner and informed him that his father requested protection. The officer painfully related the telegram he had received about 3:00 from Captain Daggett specifically forbidding his answering any plea for assistance. Expressing his regret, he begged the youngster to return with his father to the troop location so he could protect them.

By the time Willie Keils relayed Turner's message to his father, it was too late. It was 5:00 P.M., the polls were closed, darkness had fallen, and Keils was surrounded. Wisely, the judge decided to bar the doors and await daylight before trying to make his way to safety. Daggett's telegram to desist, however, had come to an office six miles away and was delivered to Turner, without an envelope, by the first person headed his way, so Barbour County whites undoubtedly knew whatever they did would be uninterrupted by federal troops. Around 6:00 P.M. a Democratic election clerk unlatched the bolted door and whites burst in, shotguns blazing. Keils and his son dived behind a counter in an effort to avoid the gunfire. One of the mob extinguished the light, so that the only remaining illumination came from the flashing of the guns. In the darkness Judge Keils sat behind the counter, at first with his son's

²⁹*Ibid.*, 328, 427, 1278; Healy to Williams, November 4, 1874, Dept. of Justice, RG 60.

hand on his shoulder, while whites cried, "Kill him, damn him, kill him." After several minutes the teenager said to his father, "I am shot to pieces." Horrified, the judge was unable even to find his son in the darkness until more minutes had passed, and whites finally called a halt. With the assistance of some blacks, Keils carried his boy to a nearby doctor, where he died two days later from four gunshot wounds.³⁰

Three hundred yards away, Lieutenant Turner had frustratedly listened to the gunfire from the polling site. He believed that the telegram he received was read by Democrats and that it gave them the final assurance to make the attack. Keils was caught completely unaware, assuming that the presence of troops meant they could be called on for protection. A number of prominent whites also argued that the troops were indirectly responsible for the violence, but for different reasons. They claimed that the proximity of soldiers emboldened the Negroes, led to their heightened insolence, and consequently forced whites to prepare for self-defense, with the disastrous results of the riot. An example of the supportive use of troops occurred in Opelika, in Lee County north of Barbour. There when rowdies threatened violence at the polls that Tuesday, Captain Edgar R. Kellogg of the Eighteenth United States Infantry took fourteen of his men to the courthouse at the request of the sheriff. The soldiers' appearance sobered the crowd, and voting quietly renewed. Captain Kellogg was sharply criticized by his superiors for his action. He responded to the reprimand by letter on November 20, 1874, in which he explained that every measure he took was at the request of civil authorities, and he closed, "I trust that the commanding general will not again feel compelled to condemn an error of judgment on my part; but if I should make such an error, I hope I shall be so fortunate as to know, as I do in this case, that my mistake has been at least the means of preventing criminal bloodshed."³¹

Sadly for the dead and wounded in Barbour County, no officer had the courage to risk such a reprimand from his superiors. The casualty estimate by state authorities was thirty

³⁰House Ex. Doc. no. 110, 2; House Report no. 262, 3-5, 598-599; *Montgomery Alabama State Journal*, 8 November 1874; Senate Report no. 704, 589-591.

³¹House Report no. 262, 5, 78-82, 799, 837, 842-843.

to forty dead in Eufaula and eighty to one hundred wounded, but these figures were exaggerated. The deputy marshal and the military kept careful check on the wounded and their numbers generally agree. Seven or eight Negroes were killed or died from wounds in the Eufaula riot, and between seventy and eighty men were wounded, less than a dozen of them white.³² Whites, including some of the wounded, claimed blacks shot the whites who were injured. This is indeed possible, for a few blacks did carry guns. However, the federal officials, civilian and military, saw few, if any, blacks discharging their weapons, and the greater possibility is that whites were accidentally shot in the chaotic melee by fellow whites.³³

As in other election day riots throughout the South in the period, violence succeeded in Alabama in 1874, and the state was redeemed. At Spring Hill, where black voting had been heavy, the white mob burned the ballot box after Keils left to find a doctor for his son. In Eufaula hundreds of blacks had not voted before the riot, and all refrained from doing so afterwards. The county went Democratic, and most blacks stayed away from the polls in the elections that followed.³⁴

Predictably, there were as many assessments of guilt in the Eufaula riot as there were official investigations of it. The county grand jury placed blame squarely on belligerent blacks and found the whites acted only in self-defense, and went so far as to convict and sentence to prison at least one black, Hilliard Miles, for perjury for daring to accuse whites of being involved at Spring Hill. The Congressional investigation, as might be expected, split. The majority report characterized the riot as a premeditated affair to intimidate black voters, while the minority blamed Radical leaders and, rather strangely, the presence of government troops. M. G. Candee, the adjutant general of the state in 1874, was sent along with the attorney general by Governor Lewis to investigate the riots in Barbour. The evidence collected, he believed, supported the contention that the two outbreaks were organized to wrest control from the Republican party, with the affair at Spring Hill planned in

³²*Ibid.*, 428, 598; Senate Report no. 704, 446, 554.

³³House Report no. 262, 428, 432, 598, 794, 805, 825.

³⁴*Ibid.*, 4-5, 216, 221, 428, 599, 799, 830-831, 967, 979; Senate Report no. 704, 446, 564, 586, 592; *Montgomery Advertiser and Mail*, November 17, 1874.

order to assassinate Keils and destroy the ballot box. The Democratic press substantiated this in the way of a rather convoluted apology for Willie Keil's death, explaining, "the shot that struck him was intended for the father, and that no one desired to harm little Willie."³⁵

Whites did not relax after the election was over, but kept pressure on Republicans, especially blacks. Democrats notified numerous blacks or their relatives that they must leave Eufaula. Especially singled out were Negroes who testified before a federal grand jury and black leaders such as Edward Odom, Aleck Williams, and Henry King.³⁶ For those who remained, economic and political prospects were bleak, as Aaron Hunter, a black Eufaula native shot during the riot, explained, "the colored men do not stand any more show here than a white man's dog; if I could get away from here I would go in two minutes."³⁷

Judge Keils was also driven from Eufaula, but not before he exhausted every avenue for redress which he could uncover. After the election he was arrested in the town for carrying a concealed weapon and resisting arrest, but was released in order to appear in Montgomery at the U. S. District Court.³⁸ On November 19 he wrote to Attorney General Williams that the county was ruled by a mob, who forced elected Republicans to surrender their offices, and ended, "Can we get any protection?"³⁹ Williams responded on November 25, informing Keils that the federal government did not have jurisdiction and advising him to seek redress from the newly-elected Democratic governor, which Keils did on December 1, asking Governor George H. Houston to offer a reward for the identification of his son's killers. On December 10 Captain Daggett and his company were transferred to Mobile, thus removing even the

³⁵Eufaula *Times*, as quoted in *Montgomery Alabama State Journal*, November 8, 1874; House Report no. 262, XIX, LXIX, LXX, 795; Senate Report no. 704, 553-555, 571.

³⁶Senate Report no. 704, 577, 581, 587-588; House Report no. 262, 217, 221, 617, 984.

³⁷House Report no. 262, 831.

³⁸Owens, "Eufaula Riot," 234-235; Walker, *Backtracking*, 265.

³⁹E. M. Keils to Attorney General George H. Williams, November 19, 1874, Dept. of Justice, RG 60.

semblance of federal protection from Eufaula.⁴⁰ By December Keils had gone to Washington to testify before the Congressional committee. On December 16 he sent his resignation to Governor Houston, and militia chief Baker assumed his office. Keils's determination, fanned by the loss of his son, remained unwavering. In February, 1877, as the last remnants of Reconstruction crumbled in the South, he appeared before yet another Congressional committee, still claiming Eufaula as his residence although he had not been able to return since he left over two years before and passionately exposing Democratic violence and arguing against the abandonment of southern Republicans by Washington.⁴¹ But the fire that drove him was long extinguished in his northern fellow Republicans. The injustice and loss which he suffered, as with that of his state, would not be relieved.

⁴⁰Williams to Keils, November 24, 1874, *Ibid.*; Keils to Governor George H. Houston, December 1, 1874, Governor George H. Houston Papers, General Correspondence (Alabama State Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama); Special Orders No. 203 from General Irvin McDowell, Letters Received by the Adjutant General's Office, 1871-1880, M666 (National Archives, Washington).

⁴¹Owens, "Eufaula Riot," 234-235; Senate Report no. 704, 588-608 *passim*.

AN ATTEMPT TO BREAK THE "SOLID SOUTH"

by

William F. Muggleston

From the end of political Reconstruction in 1877 to well into the twentieth century, the late Confederacy remained solidly Democratic in national elections. Every Republican president from Hayes to McKinley attempted in vain to crack the "solid South."¹ William McKinley received an enthusiastic welcome at the Atlanta Peace Jubilee after the Spanish-American War, but he made no real effort to change the political coloration of the region.² Theodore Roosevelt entertained some hope of making his party more respectable below the Mason and Dixon Line. He was personally popular in the South and never wearied of reminding southerners that his mother was from Georgia. But by the end of his second term his prestige in the South had plummeted due to controversial black political appointments and his dinner with Booker T. Washington.

The first Republican president to give southern voters any serious or sustained attention was William Howard Taft.³ He campaigned in the South in 1908 and won no electoral votes but did gather a respectable popular vote.⁴ Moreover, Taft continued to court southern citizens even after his victory. In December in an address to the North Carolina Society in New York City he declared that he was no enemy of state suffrage laws that disfranchised ignorant and incompetent voters. He then chose Augusta, Georgia, as a winter vacation spot, ostensibly to rest after the recent campaign; but as a popular maga-

¹Vincent P. De Santis, *Republicans Face the Southern Question: The New Departure Years, 1877-1897* (Baltimore, 1959); Stanley P. Hirshon, *Fairwell to the Bloody Shirt: Northern Republicans and the Southern Negro, 1877-1893* (Bloomington, 1962).

²Margaret Leech, *In the Days of McKinley* (New York, 1959), 348-49.

³The following discussion is largely from E. Merton Coulter, "The Attempt of William Howard Taft to Break the Solid South," *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, XIX (June 1935), 134-44.

⁴In Tennessee, North Carolina, Arkansas and Oklahoma Bryan's pluralities were narrow. He gathered 59.9 per cent of the vote in Virginia, 54.5 per cent in Georgia. "Trying to Melt the Solid South," *The Literary Digest*, XXXVIII (January 23, 1909), 122.

zine noted, Augusta became "the Mecca for all Southerners who have hope of a white Republican party in that section."⁵

Contrary to his announced policy not to be hosted by cities or particular groups while "vacationing" in the South, Taft agreed to visit the University of Georgia in January, 1909; his geniality and warm smile made the whistle-stops along the way resemble the homeward journey of a triumphant warrior. In Atlanta he declared that two strong parties would be as good for the South as they were for the rest of the nation. Later in May, after his inauguration, the new President again journeyed south to speak in Charlotte, North Carolina. Taft's was the most serious effort by any Republican president since Reconstruction to promote his party's standing in the South and help that region develop a two-party system and take a more active role in the national government.

Predictably, the great majority of southern newspaper editors was suspicious if not openly hostile toward any Republican penetration of their section. The *Richmond News-Leader* said bluntly that "no power or skill, bribery, cajolment, or force will induce the masses of the white people of the South to give their confidence or their support to any party which represents or stands for negro equality in politics."⁶

However, a handful of southern spokesmen responded favorably to Taft's overtures. The editor of the *Birmingham News* declared in a speech inviting the new President to Birmingham, "Judge Taft, if you knew the heart and head of the men of the South . . . you would know that they regard the result of the last election [1908] as a benediction from God Almighty himself to the people of the South over their own protest." The *Atlanta Constitution*, the South's leading newspaper and certainly no friend of the Republican party, added, "In the future the Democratic party must hold the South, if it continues to hold it unbroken, not as an asset, convertible to any purpose, but upon the merits of its platform and policies."⁷

⁵*Ibid.*, 121.

⁶Quoted in *ibid.*, 122.

⁷Quoted in *ibid.*, 121-22.

The Alabamian Hannis P. Taylor, professor of constitutional law at Columbia University, called the solid South a "national calamity." He noted the political sterility of the region over the past half century — not since 1857 had a southerner been president or vice-president or been seriously considered for either office. In light of Taft's cordial gestures and other recent developments, Taylor maintained that the *raison d'être* for the solid South had ceased to exist. Southern constitution-makers had effectively eliminated the political threat of black voting. At the same time, the South's one-party system was strangling "the political genius that was once the basis of her power." Taylor concluded: "The Solid South has ceased to be of any value to anybody. The time has arrived when the dullest and most bigoted mind must perceive that political readjustment and realignment are for the South an imperious necessity."⁸

Into the discussion at this point stepped Julian LaRose Harris, with a specific proposal for curing the South's political ills which Taylor and others had diagnosed. Harris, the eldest son of the noted Georgia journalist and folklorist Joel Chandler Harris, was himself a talented and ambitious young newspaperman who in 1900, at age twenty-six, had become managing editor of the *Atlanta Constitution*. Six years later he resigned the position to join his father in the elder Harris's last undertaking, the founding of *Uncle Remus's Magazine*, dedicated to the cause of sectional and racial reconciliation. The first issue appeared in June 1907. Thirteen months later Joel Chandler Harris died and his son succeeded him as editor.⁹ Up to then the magazine had been an innocuous and noncontroversial organ consisting mostly of fiction, poetry, and book reviews. Under Julian Harris it experienced a dramatic transformation. The amount of friction decreased but rose in quality. More space was now devoted to contemporary social and political affairs, as Harris began using the magazine as a sounding board for

⁸Hannis Taylor, "The Solid South a National Calamity," *North American Review*, CLXXXIX (January 1909), 7. For other evidence of southern interest in a revival of a genuine two-party system, see Bruce Clayton, *The Savage Ideal: Intolerance and Intellectual Leadership in the South, 1890-1914* (Baltimore and London, 1972), 153-77.

⁹For an account of the establishment and history of *Uncle Remus's Magazine*, see William F. Mugleston, "The Perils of Southern Publishing: a History of *Uncle Remus's Magazine*," *Journalism Quarterly*, LII (Autumn 1975), 515-21, 608.

not only his father's ideas but, even more, his own. Under his editorship articles appeared on convict leasing and mob violence, including an account of the bloody and destructive 1908 race riot at Springfield, Illinois. There was also a series on the night riding and violence in the Reelfoot Lake area of Northwestern Tennessee the same year.¹⁰ Editor Harris noted the great interest these articles aroused; several newspapers printed extracts.

It is not surprising that he ran features like these. From his father Julian Harris inherited an abhorrence of mob violence and a respect for orderly processes of law, and his condemnation of lawlessness in *Uncle Remus's Magazine* was a step toward fulfilling Joel Chandler Harris's aim of making the magazine an organ of toleration and understanding. Later in the 1920's he waged a Pulitzer Prize-winning battle against the Ku Klux Klan in Georgia which reflected his formative years under his father. Moreover, young Harris was eager to carve his own niche in the newspaper world and escape from the shadow of his more famous father. The way to do this, he reasoned, was to take bold and fearless editorial stands.

This frame of mind partly explains his spectacular maiden editorial in the March, 1909 issue, "Shall the Solid South Be Shattered?" While the region was experiencing a remarkable economic and commercial awakening in the twentieth century, began Harris, politically it was in a pathetic and atrophied condition. The recent flutter of interest spearheaded by President Taft in Republican attempts to expand in the South should be faced "sympathetically, seriously, and above all honestly," he urged. The trauma that southern whites experienced in Negro voting and officeholding after the war and the effort to overcome it were the basis of the "solid South." "The South has never believed, and never will believe, that the negro should have been given the right to vote before he was fully equipped to measure to the responsibility of suffrage," and Harris defended the Reconstruction Ku Klux Klan and the white Democratic primary as legitimate measures to down the specter of Negro balloting. Now in 1909 this was no longer a threat, however; southern disfranchisement laws with their educational

¹⁰For a recent account of this affair, see Paul J. Vanderwood, *Night Riders of Reelfoot Lake* (Memphis, 1969).

and "grandfather" clauses effectively barred the black voter while permitting his uneducated white neighbor to cast a ballot. But at what cost to the South as a whole? "The white Democratic primary — an evil, but until now, perhaps, a necessary evil — has literally squeezed the South dry of the sap of statesmanship, and there has sprung up a horde of shrewd, shortsighted politicians. . . ." Since the primary was for all practical purposes the election itself, such contests, charged Harris, were little more than exercises in "vulgar jocularly and personal spite" that did nothing toward educating citizens in the problems of modern government. As an example, he pointed to the two most recent gubernatorial primaries in Georgia. With no effective Populist or Republican opposition, the Democrats fell to brawling among themselves. The 1906 contest featured a bitter fight for the governorship between Hoke Smith and Atlanta *Constitution* publisher Clark Howell, while the opening campaign in the long and abusive feud between Smith and Joseph M. Brown occurred in 1908.¹¹ Georgians had witnessed "an outpouring of personal abuse, vicious cartooning, and a flow of billingsgate that would make a fishwife faint . . . [but] not one step forward is taken in the path of educating the people in issues that confront them. . . ."

Meanwhile, continued the young editor, the educational restriction was spurring on ambitious blacks to acquire the learning necessary to qualify for the ballot, and within fifteen or twenty-five years they would succeed, he predicted. All the while the illiterate white voter sat "whistling and whittling and forgetting that even grandfathers, though dead, soon become great-grandfathers, while the grandson becomes impossible as an ancestor."

Harris also pointed to the South's impotence in the national Democratic party when it came time to write platforms and nominate candidates. "They have heard for years that the Democrats of the South would 'vote for a yellow dog' if the party nominated one." For the same reason the Republicans saw no need to throw even a crumb southward. "The 'Solid South' is no longer a power," he concluded, "it is a phase that is the signal for laughter."

¹¹E. Merton Coulter, *Georgia: A Short History* (Chapel Hill, 1960), 397-99.

What then were loyal southerners to do? Harris saw two alternatives. The first and less likely path was to seize control of the Democratic party, nominate southern candidates, and make a determined fight. The better course was to break the solid South and vote Republican. If Georgia, for example, were to do this in the next election, reasoned Harris, she would surely win a Cabinet office and one or more Republican Congressional seats.

And there you have the South's political freedom told in a nutshell. . . . Then the South will have representation in the party councils of the Republican party, and what her representatives say will be heeded, not only because doubtful states are not easily to be disregarded, but equally because the Republican party will be hearing the South's story from a Southern Republican.¹²

There were several reasons for Harris taking this bold stand. As already noted, he was eager to make his mark in journalism. More importantly, he sincerely believed that the South was overdue for a change in its political complexion. And at this particular juncture he viewed the Republican party as an especially appropriate organ for fashioning such a change. Theodore Roosevelt had just left office after seven and one-half years of vigorous executive leadership, and both Julian and Joel Chandler Harris had for some time been his personal acquaintances and admirers. Roosevelt had long been fond of the writings of the elder Harris and in 1902 prevailed upon the shy Georgian to visit him at the White House. Three years later on a trip to Atlanta the president again met Harris, and in 1907 Joel Chandler Harris, this time accompanied by Julian, visited Roosevelt in Washington for a second time.¹³

¹²*Uncle Remus's The Home Magazine*, XXV (March 1909), 5-6. In March 1908 *Uncle Remus's Magazine* had purchased *The Home Magazine* of Indianapolis, a leading midwestern household monthly. The two combined to become *Uncle Remus's The Home Magazine*.

¹³Julia Collier Harris, *The Life and Letters of Joel Chandler Harris* (Boston, 1918), 508-17, 599-600; Paul M. Cousins, *Joel Chandler Harris; A Biography* (Baton Rouge, 1968), 200-03; Clyde H. Dornbusch, "Joel Chandler Harris Visits the White House," *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, XLVI (March 1962), 41-43; *Atlanta Constitution*, November 18, 19, 21, 1907.

Julian Harris and Roosevelt also became close friends. Roosevelt gave his encouragement in his work on *Uncle Remus's Magazine* and in 1908 paid him a signal tribute when he wrote, "As soon as I met you I took a great fancy to you, for I felt that I could not only like you but believe in you. . . ." ¹⁴ Thus, attracted to Roosevelt personally and frustrated by the political sterility of the Democratic South, Harris saw Republicanism as the potential savior of the region.

His editorial was in fact a remarkable example of quixotic thinking. Harris did not explain how southern whites, conditioned since Reconstruction to vote Democratic, might be persuaded to cast their ballots for the party long associated in the popular mind with Radical rule and black officeholding. Moreover, his prediction of a Cabinet post for the South after a single state revolted from the Democratic party seemed visionary. His belief that a strong two-party system would win for the South more respect in the councils of the two major parties and in the national government was logical, but he left unanswered too many questions for southerners chronically sensitive to the possibility of a resurgence of Republicanism in their region.

The loosely worded editorial may have been designed only as a "trial balloon" in the South. "I had intended to be drastic, and think I was. . . ," Harris later told Roosevelt. ¹⁵ In any case, reaction was swift and predictable. A score of southern newspapers took note of Harris's proposal. Typical of most was the response of the editor of the *Macon (Georgia) Telegraph*, who leveled his artillery at Harris in no less than four editorials in two months. Regarding the possibility of a Cabinet officer from Georgia, the *Telegraph* cried, "What a great reward. Some half-hearted, slack twisted fellow, if he could be pulled over to the side of the flesh pots, would get up to the pie counter in Washington! And all Georgia would tumble down on their marrow bones and give thanks that our deliverance had come!" The paper charged that "the bewildered editor of the *Uncle Remus Magazine*" had either become a Re-

¹⁴Theodore Roosevelt to Julian Harris, July 6, 1908, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division, Washington, D. C. Cited hereafter as Roosevelt Papers.

¹⁵Julian Harris to Theodore Roosevelt, December 2, 1911, Roosevelt Papers.

publican, was trying to create a "sensation," or was seeking to broaden his northern readership. Denying that it had ever been a slave to the Democratic party, the *Telegraph* nevertheless insisted that to break the solid South would be to remove the last check on the Republican party and would result in absolutism, "ruin in the South, and the negro sitting on the top of the wreck."¹⁶

All his life Harris relished a good editorial fight, and he enthusiastically jumped into the affray he had touched off. In the next issue of *Uncle Remus's* he shot back at the *Telegraph*, charging that its editorials failed to deal substantively with any of the issues he had raised. He quoted the *Atlanta Constitution*, which fully endorsed his stand and proclaimed that Harris's editorial "should foreshadow large and intelligent service to the south by a young man who is directing the destinies of the south's only national periodical." Several hundred letters poured into the magazine's office. Among them was the expected criticism but also much unqualified support. "Your editorial is admirable in every way," Roosevelt reassured Harris.¹⁷

The enthusiastic editor sent each southern governor a copy of the editorial and asked his opinion. The only reply was from Governor Albert W. Gilchrist of Florida, who denied that the South was powerless in the national Democratic party. Former governor James K. Vardaman of Mississippi defended the solid South and scorned Harris's "pusillanimous foolishness." The *Nashville Tennessean* attacked the "scurrilous," "slanderous," and "abusive" advice of the young editor, "the hair-brained successor to his lamented father . . . Mr. Julian Harris . . . has made an ass of himself." After probably a diligent search, Harris found two smaller southern newspapers that endorsed his stand, one in Thibodaux, Louisiana, and another in Daytona, Florida. The latter wrote that he had raised "a question of wonderfully vital importance" and urged southerners to refrain from attacking Harris because of his youth.¹⁸

¹⁶Macon *Telegraph*, February 27, March 28, April 8, 29, 1909.

¹⁷Atlanta *Constitution*, February 28, 1909; *Uncle Remus's The Home Magazine*, XXV (April 1909), 5-6; Theodore Roosevelt to Julian Harris, February 24, 1909, Roosevelt Papers.

¹⁸*Uncle Remus's The Home Magazine*, XXV (July 1909), 6.

The tempest subsided during the summer of 1909 and no further reference to it appeared in *Uncle Remus's Magazine*, which lost 3800 subscribers in the affair. Though he won few plaudits in or out of Georgia for the stand he took, Harris's name had appeared in numerous southern magazines and newspapers, and what had been a statewide reputation was now a regional one. His views on other matters would now at least be listened to throughout the South. For a man only thirty-five years of age, this was no mean achievement.

The whole episode further reinforced Harris's belief in the soundness of his own stand and helped to drive him into the arms of Roosevelt in 1912 as one of the few southern supporters of the Bull Moose party. In the next three years he editorialized in favor of many progressive programs such as the commission plan of municipal government, strengthened public education, pure food laws, and against illiteracy, lynching, and mob violence. In 1911 he participated in a movement to reform Atlanta's government and install a commission system. Furthermore, he grew increasingly unhappy with Taft, whom he opposed on the tariff, in the Ballinger-Pinchot controversy, and in a struggle over the House speakership. He endorsed Roosevelt's important Osawatimie, Kansas speech of August, 1910, and proclaimed that the "noble fight of the insurgent Republicans" should be a call to arms for the "solid, silent South."¹⁹ Finally, in April, 1912, shortly before the conventions met, Harris urged Roosevelt's nomination by the Republican party and predicted he would win in November with the largest popular vote ever received by a Republican candidate.²⁰ Although he had been a lifelong Democrat up to that time and believed that Woodrow Wilson was that party's best choice, by 1912 Harris was solidly in the Roosevelt camp, be it Republican or Progressive.

Harris's views on the race question also resembled those of other southern Progressives and of Roosevelt in 1912. His solid South editorial is notable for what it did not say about the Negro's place in the two-party South he envisioned. Although he predicted that blacks would soon acquire the learning

¹⁹*Ibid.*, XXVI (February 1910), 17; XXVII (April 1910), 23; XXVIII (October 1910), 18.

²⁰Julian Harris to [Frank?] Harper, April 26, 1912, Roosevelt Papers.

necessary to win the right to vote, he stated specifically that "the negro who waits for a federal appointment will turn gray with age." In short, whites would continue to hold all important state and federal offices in any future two-party South. For whom, then, would Negroes cast their votes? Harris did not speculate on this. Presumably, the black vote would be a neutral factor in southern politics, for Harris and most southern Progressives foresaw Negroes in a permanently inferior role, gently tutored in the arts of civilization by the benevolent master race. To most southern Progressives, social and economic reform for the region could come only after the specter of Negro political power was downed. As students of southern Progressivism have noted, the movement was a remarkable one-sided affair involving progress "for whites only" and ignoring the most benighted sector of the population, the large black minority.²¹ Harris, like most southern Progressives, combined support for Progressive reforms with a belief in white supremacy and leadership of the South by an educated and humane white elite.

Harris's views on the political sterility of southern Negroes meshed neatly with those of Roosevelt in 1912. The ex-president found that black voters throughout the nation were attracted to his Progressive movement in the belief that it represented social justice for all men regardless of race. Roosevelt welcomed Negro support in the North, but southern backers warned that if his party were to make any headway in that region it must be organized on a "lily-white" basis. After much rationalizing and not a little hypocrisy, Roosevelt decided to follow the politically expedient course of rejecting black support in the South while accepting it elsewhere. He wrote a long letter to Harris explaining his position; the latter replied with a thumping endorsement and assured Roosevelt that there were "hundreds of thousands" of southerners ready to join with him in

²¹Jack Temple Kirby, *Darkness at the Dawning: Race and Reform in the Progressive South* (Philadelphia, 1972), *passim*; C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913* (Baton Rouge, 1951), 373-95. It has also been argued that Progressivism nationwide ignored the Negro. See Dewey W. Grantham, Jr., "The Progressive Movement and the Negro," *South Atlantic Quarterly*, LIV (October 1955), 461-77.

the Progressive crusade.²²

Thus Harris's attempt to break the solid South led to the even more quixotic effort of a third party movement in 1912. To him it seemed that the time was overdue for the South to cast off the Democratic albatross from around its neck, and perhaps it was, but he underestimated both the endurance of the two-party system in American politics and the tenacity with which white southerners were still wont to vote Democratic a generation after the passing of political Reconstruction. Moreover, the presence of a southern Democrat on the ticket in 1912 almost automatically doomed the chances of any other candidate in the South, particularly one representing a third party. Harris's personal friendship and admiration for the former president blinded him to the fact that many southerners feared Roosevelt's advanced Progressive program; southern editors attacked him intemperately as a "radical" and a wild man. Roosevelt's past gestures of support for Negroes aroused suspicion over whether his two-faced Progressive party racial policy was anything more than political fakery aimed at winning southern white votes.

For Harris the excursion into third-party politics was short and unrewarding — after 1912 he was firmly back in the Democratic camp. There is irony in that what he failed to accomplish in 1912 by supporting Roosevelt and a third party, the breaking of the solid South, was unexpectedly achieved sixteen years later by the presence on the Democratic ticket of Alfred E. Smith, another New Yorker whom Harris also ardently supported, but whom many other southerners found even more distasteful than they had Roosevelt. Herbert Hoover won seven southern and border states in 1928 and led the GOP to its first significant victories in the South since Reconstruction. Thus Harris finally saw the solid South shattered by the Republican party as he had once urged, but by a man whom changing times and circumstances forbade his supporting.

²²For details of the situation facing the Progressive party in the South, see George E. Mowry, "The South and the Progressive Lily-White Party of 1912," *Journal of Southern History*, VI (May 1940), 237-40, and Arthur S. Link, "Theodore Roosevelt and the South in 1912," *North Carolina Historical Review*, XXIII (July 1946), 313-17. The correspondence between Roosevelt and Harris is reprinted in full in Arthur S. Link, ed., "Correspondence Relating to the Progressive Party's 'Lily-White' Policy in 1912," *Journal of Southern History*, X (November 1944), 480-90.

FLORENCE UNIVERSITY FOR WOMEN

by

Kenneth R. Johnson

In the late 1880's Florence, Alabama, was experiencing an economic boom. Many civic and business leaders believed Florence could become a leading iron producing, manufacturing, and commercial center. The rapid expansion of industrial production, the increasing population, the expansion of real estate and construction, and the rise of new commercial and banking activities added realism to this belief. Some of the business promoters of the Florence boom were also interested in promoting Florence as an educational center. The Florence Synodical Female College and Florence State Normal School already existed in Florence. But these institutions were small and did not offer promise of becoming prominent institutions of higher education. Businessmen were joined in their promotional activities by some of the leading members of the Southern Baptists such as Dr. J. B. Hawthorne, Dr. J. S. Lawton, Judge Porter King, T. T. Eaton, and others who were eager to see a great Baptist institution of higher learning created somewhere in the South.

These two groups worked together to establish a university in Florence. In 1890 a large four-story building, 220 feet long by 121 feet wide, was built on a seven acre campus between Seymour and Sherrod Avenue. It cost nearly \$80,000 and was the tallest and most modern building in the Muscle Shoals area. The following year, the Southern Female University was formally organized and occupied the building. In September, 1891, the university was launched under the presidency of Dr. L. D. Bass, a Baptist minister, with a faculty of twenty members and a student body of about 125. The first year of operation seemed to be very successful for the new university. The second got off to a smooth start with an increased enrollment. Despite the apparent success, in October, 1892, the university was suddenly moved to Birmingham.¹

¹Richard Sheridan, "The Baptist University of Florence, Alabama." A paper presented before the Tennessee Valley Historical Society, July 15, 1973. A copy is in the Tennessee Valley Historical Society Collection, Wesleyan Archives, Florence, Alabama.

Although many attempts were made to find a constructive use for it, the university building stood vacant from 1892 to 1908. In October, 1892, the *Florence Times* reported that the heads of two old, established flourishing schools had applied for the use of the building.² In 1893 the Masonic Fraternity of Alabama considered establishing a home for widows and orphans in the building but eventually decided to go to Montgomery.³ Also, R. T. Goodwyn of Petersburg, Virginia, examined the building carefully with a view to establishing a military school. Although the *Florence Times* announced that Goodwyn would begin preparing for the fall session, it was never opened. Numerous other proposals were made and many prospective parties examined the building, but nothing serious developed. The depression of 1893 killed the Florence boom and reduced prospective users of the building. On February 21, 1894, the Florence Land, Mining, and Manufacturing Company which owned the building was declared bankrupt. William J. Wood was appointed trustee of the company assets. In August, 1897, the university building was sold to N. C. Elting, President of the First National Bank of Florence and the Florence Land Company, for \$60,000.⁵

Apparently, Elting and his associates had no more success in finding a constructive use for the building than its previous owners. But conditions began to change. The depression gradually wore off and prosperity returned. Also, in 1904 the Florence Female Synodical College closed its doors, leaving Florence with only the State Normal School which was still essentially a teacher training institution. These conditions encouraged the founding of a new university in Florence. In late 1905 success seemed to be on the way.

In November, 1905, Mr. Elting announced that a university "second to none" would be opened in September of the following year. The Rev. J. W. McCollum of Philadelphia had visited Florence and examined the university building. He announced that if Florence would contribute \$2,500 to help restore the building, he would raise a large endowment, remodel

²*Florence Times*, October 15, 1892.

³*Ibid.*, November 11, 1893.

⁴*Ibid.*, June 10, 1893.

⁵Lauderdale County Chancery Court Minute Book M, p. 314.

and equip the building, and open an institution with a qualified staff. Florentines believed that an institution would "add much to the welfare of the city spiritually, morally, and financially." The Florence Business League demonstrated these sentiments by quickly raising the \$2,500;⁶ but the project failed when McCollum was unable to raise adequate funds.

A short time later, success was achieved. Mr. Elting had been corresponding with Mr. M. W. Hatton, president of the Southern Female College at LaGrange, Georgia, for many months about the possibility of moving his institution to Florence. The two men reached an agreement in 1908. In April, Elting announced that Hatton would establish a new woman's college in Florence.⁷ Florence businessmen applauded this announcement. They were especially delighted when they learned that the new institution would bring about thirty to fifty thousand dollars annually into the Florence economy. To assist the project, the Florence Commercial Club promised to raise \$2,500. The amount was fully subscribed within three days.⁸

Preparations began almost immediately. Renovation of the building was started by several contractors. O. W. Anderson, an experienced educator, was hired to serve as a co-president with Mr. Hatton, who expected to continue as president of the LaGrange institution. Preparation of a college catalogue and the search for a qualified faculty was started in the spring of 1908.⁹ On June 26, a college catalogue was issued and advertisements appeared in major newspapers throughout the South. The public learned for the first time that the new institution would be named the Florence University for Women. According to the new catalogue, the university would be non-sectarian yet would offer all the advantages of religious development. Also, by early June, Mr. Hatton announced that a faculty consisting of teachers "from the best schools in America and Europe" had been selected.¹⁰

In the late summer, two dormitories at the Southern Fe-

⁶*Florence Times*, November 3, 10, 1905, and January 5, April 27, 1906.

⁷*Ibid.*, May 1, 1908.

⁸*Ibid.*, May 8 and June 26, 1908.

⁹*Ibid.*, May 22, July 10, 17, 1908.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, June 5, 26, 1908.

male University in LaGrange burned to the ground thereby forcing the closing of that institution. President Hatton announced that "the entire strength of the college" would be moved to Florence.¹¹ Apparently some of the students from that institution did transfer to Florence, but the faculty at Florence was not increased.

On Wednesday, September 16, the university opened its doors and welcomed students. Over fifty enrolled the first day and subsequently others came. The formal opening came a few days later with a ceremony in the university chapel.¹² The curriculum was a blend of the old and the new. One could study classical and modern language, literature, music, art, elocution, history, and science. A domestic department taught dress making, sewing, cooking, and household economics, all of which prepared the young ladies for the traditional role in the home. For the young ladies who expected to seek gainful employment outside the home, a normal department trained them to be school teachers. A business department taught shorthand, typewriting, bookkeeping, and other related subject matter.¹³

While the Florence University for Women got off to a good start, there were problems. The campus was located about one-half mile north of the Florence population center. The street car system and electric power lines did not extend to it. The Florence Commercial Club assumed responsibility for arranging for the extension of street car lines and electricity service to the University. The club leaders contacted Mr. J. W. Worthington, vice-president of the Sheffield Company, which owned the street car and electric power lines. He quickly agreed to extend power lines to the University when he learned that there were fifteen other potential consumers in that area. He would not, however, agree to extend the street car lines beyond the city limits without a guarantee that it would be profitable.¹⁴ No such guarantee could be made. In July, 1908, realizing that street car lines would not be extended, Hatton and Anderton requested the city council to "grade and gravel Royal Avenue from Wood Avenue to Sherrod Avenue and that avenue

¹¹*Ibid.*, August 14, 1908.

¹²*Ibid.*, September 18, 25, 1908.

¹³*Ibid.*, August 3, 1908 and March 26, 1909.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, January 15, 1909 and April 30, 1909.

northward to Lee Street." They also requested that sidewalks be constructed in the same area. Completion of this proposal would have brought good roads and sidewalks to the edge of the campus. While the Council was sympathetic, it was slow to move. In the summer of 1909 another petition was presented from the citizens living in the area requesting essentially the same improvements. In response to this petition, the Council did arrange for the improvement of Royal Street and established a committee to find ways of raising money for the additional work.¹⁵ Apparently no further improvements were made for many years.

As the 1908-09 academic year came to an end, the university was placed on a more firm organizational basis. When the Florence University for Women was opened, a number of Florentine businessmen had served as a voluntary and informal board of trustees without statutory authority. In May, 1909, the school was incorporated under Alabama law. A charter was adopted and trustees were elected. They included A. E. Walker, O. W. Anderton, C. M. Southall, Frank Jackson, H. C. Gilbert, R. L. Glenn, M. W. Hatton, and John T. Ashcraft, who was elected president of the board, and M. W. Camper, who was elected secretary.¹⁶

The first academic year came to an end with a "brilliant" commencement on May 15, 1909. Eleven degrees and four certificates were granted.¹⁷

After the summer break, the university began its second year with a larger faculty and a broader program. A department of domestic science and a violin department were added along with two additional faculty members, which brought the total faculty to sixteen. The student enrollment was reported to be 112 girls, mainly from Alabama but also from elsewhere in the South. According to the Florence University for

¹⁵*Minutes*, Alderman meetings, Florence, Alabama. July 20, 1908, and May 3, July 5, and September 14, 1909.

¹⁶*Florence Times*, May 14, 1909.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, May 12, 21, 1909; *Bulletin* of the Florence University of Women, 1910-11. (Copy in the local history room of Florence-Lauderdale Public Library, Florence, Alabama.); *Florence Times*, December 3, 1909; *The Varsity*, Florence University for Women *Annual*, 1909. Copy in the Tennessee Valley Historical Society Collection, Collier Library, University of North Alabama.

Women's *Bulletin* for 1910-11, the cost of room, board, tuition, laundry, and fees for the whole academic year was about \$350.00.¹⁷

In the second year of operation, the school took on some modern characteristics. A school annual, *The Varsity*, was issued. It was dedicated to the people of Florence. It contained class pictures, but no individual pictures of the students or faculty. Pictures of student activities and organizations were included. The campus organizations included the Young Women's Christian Association, Tennis Club, Basketball Club, Kodak Club, Georgia Club, and Fudge Club.¹⁸

For dramatic experience, public entertainment, and to raise money, the dramatics department put on three short plays in the Florence Opera House in the spring of 1910. The plays were "By Telephone" by Maurice Hogemen, "Miss Forrester's Crusade" by C. L. Dalrymple, and "Barbara" by Jerome K. Jerome. Admission was 25c, 35c, and 50c per person.¹⁹

A short time later, the second year came to an end with a series of commencement activities which lasted four days.²⁰

In September, 1910, the third year got under way quietly with expectations of a great year. It ended abruptly in disaster. About 3:00 a.m. one morning in early April, 1911, frightened young ladies rushed from their room as fire spread through the eastern part of the building. The city fire department quickly responded to the call, but there was no chance of saving the building. Residents of Florence welcomed the students and faculty into their homes for the balance of the night. By daybreak, the Florence University for Women building valued at over \$100,000, lay in ashes along with books and equipment, records, and most of the personal property of the students and faculty. The cause of the fire was never clearly determined, but it was generally blamed on defective electrical wiring.²¹ In any event, the Florence University for Women was no more.

¹⁸*Ibid.*

¹⁹*Florence Times*, April 1, 1910.

²⁰*Ibid.*, May 6, 20, 1910.

²¹*Ibid.*, March 3, 1911.

The trustees, administrative officials, and many Florence businessmen held a meeting in the new Florence Hotel the following morning to arrange for the continuation of the University. Hopes were high that the old Jefferson Hotel building, which was then vacant, could be used. But investigation and additional meetings over the next few days revealed that no adequate building existed in the Florence area. Furthermore, the old building was insured for only \$16,000. This amount would not properly equip another building even if one could be found. As it became clear that the university would not reopen, other alternatives began to be explored. Mr. Hatton's brother, H. E. Hatton, was president of Liberty College in Kentucky. He agreed to receive the students from Florence for the remainder of the year. This arrangement made it possible for the young ladies to graduate there on schedule.²² Most students and the faculty members moved to their homes or on to other institutions.

With the closing of Florence University for Women, Florence lost its last female institution and also was without a university until 1968 when Florence State College became the Florence State University.

²²*Ibid.*, March 10, 1911.

THE REVOLT AGAINST WILSON:
SOUTHERN LEADERSHIP AND THE DEMOCRATIC
CAUCUS OF 1920

by

Robert D. Ward and Frederick W. Brogdon

Historians have agreed that Woodrow Wilson should be numbered among the nation's strong presidents. The certainty of his leadership, his drive toward goals of his choosing, and his clear control of his party have made the nomination eminently sound. Wilson's successes in imposing his will on his often factious party colleagues are well-rehearsed examples of the force and power of his leadership. It was Wilson that used the mechanism of the party caucus to produce legislative victories in the passage of his early program, and even in his greatest defeat on the issue of the League of Nations it has been a point of emphasis that a hard core of Democratic senators remained staunchly loyal to his wishes and dictates.

Contrary to this view, it is surprising to learn that at the end of his career Wilson's leadership was questioned and repudiated by his fellow Democrats in the House of Representatives, and that the repudiation came after the President had placed his right to lead squarely on the line. The issue and incident of repudiation have been obscured by the attraction offered by the Senate fight on the Treaty of Versailles, and further lost to sight by the paucity of studies dealing with the civilian making of American military policies. It was on the issue of compulsory military training in peacetime that Wilson staked his power and prestige, and on that issue that his Democratic representatives overwhelmingly and triumphantly overrode his voice and denied his right to party leadership.

There are few truly isolated events in the web of circumstance, and Wilson's clash with his fellow Democrats was a part of ideas and interests and positions that had taken shape and expression in earlier years. The House Democratic Caucus of 1920 lies at the end of a chain of challenge and opposition forged by Southern political leadership.

Universal military training was a supposedly unique American answer to the problem of raising military manpower. While specifically conscriptive in nature, the system attempted to separate the roles of training and service and thus offer a more palatable answer to the need for mass armies in a nation whose traditions decreed the smallest of active forces in time of peace. The issue of UMT had been obliquely raised by Theodore Roosevelt in a message to Congress in 1906, but it was General Leonard Wood who acted as the major propagandist for the idea.¹ Despite his energy and perseverance, Wood made only limited headway toward his goal of creating a viable army reserve. The idea of universal training had little following and less political support, and Wood was forced to the voluntary alternatives of trying to increase military training in colleges and in inaugurating his famous summer camps for college students and businessmen.²

It was the advent of war in Europe in 1914 that acted as a catalyst to transform the idea of universal military training into a popular movement. The war brought an immediacy to American military problems and made it possible to spread the gospel of UMT in ever-widening circles. One of the first groups to accept compulsory training as an article of faith was the National Security League, organized in 1914 by S. Stanwood Menken, a New York attorney. The League was in the vanguard of those crying for military preparedness, and it sought "recognition of the fact that the obligation of universal military service requires universal military training."³

In 1914, President Wilson called for voluntary training to

¹See James D. Richardson, ed., *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, 20 vols. (New York, n.d.), XV, 7070. For Wood's activities see Mary T. Reynolds, "The General Staff as a Propaganda Agency, 1908-1914," *The Public Opinion Quarterly* (July, 1939), 391-408; Robert David Ward, "A Note on General Leonard Wood's Experimental Companies," *Military Affairs*, XXXV (October, 1971), 92-93.

²John Gary Clifford, *The Citizen Soldiers* (Lexington, 1972) is the best treatment of the Plattsburg Movement, but his assumption that the socially elite who rallied to it were simply gracious representatives of democracy seems unduly influenced by his interviews.

³Quoted in Robert David Ward, "The Origin and Activities of the National Security League, 1914-1919," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XLVII (June, 1960), 51-65.

produce a "citizenry trained and accustomed to arms."⁴ But he was cool to the demands of preparedness advocates, a coolness partially produced by the Republican domination of the movement. As preparedness agitation grew in volume, the War Department found it difficult to remain deaf to demands for strengthening the armed forces. Secretary of War Lindley M. Garrison shared most of the views of preparedness advocates and gave his private support to the National Security League.⁵ On March 11, 1915, Garrison instructed the Army War College to make a study of American military policy, to include "a careful study of the question of a Reserve for both the Regular Army and the Organized Militia, and, *if possible to agree on it*, a plan for the formation of such reserve."⁶ By April, the Secretary had refined his thoughts and was privately advocating a new army reserve "to be called, say, United States Reserves." If the new organization could not be filled with volunteers, Garrison favored "a provision for drafting."⁷

The Secretary of War had been conducting an internal study in his own department. But now the situation changed. President Wilson, worried over the possibility of American involvement in the war, and keenly aware that the Republicans had a strong political issue in preparedness, altered his course. On July 21, 1915, he asked his service secretaries to present plans for strengthening the national defense. In his letter to Garrison the President specifically asked to be informed on the method of "training of the citizen soldiers."⁸ When Wilson called, Garrison was ready. By August the Secretary reported the completed outline of a policy based on an increase in the Regular Army and the establishment of a Continental Army

⁴Quoted in John McAuley Palmer, *America in Arms; The Experience of the United States with Military Organization* (New Haven, 1941), 154.

⁵When Alton B. Parker refused to participate in the League, Garrison wrote him and explained that "this matter was of sufficient importance to receive consideration." Parker thereupon accepted the honorary vice-presidency. See *National Security League, Hearings Before a Special Committee of the House of Representatives*, 65 Cong., 3 Sess., 31 parts (Washington, 1919), XXVI, 1799.

⁶Quoted in AG to President, WCD, March 11, 1915; and see Chief, WCD, Memorandum For All Officers On Duty At The Army War College Division, April 23, 1915, both in RG 165, National Archives and Records Service.

⁷Garrison, Memorandum Relating to Military Policy, April 28, 1915, in *ibid.*

⁸Wilson to Garrison, July 21, 1915, as quoted in Acting SecWar to WCD, August, 1915, *ibid.*

of 400,000 men. Garrison informed the President that while our earliest traditions included compulsory military training, the "sentiments of the people are now opposed to the idea. What we need now is a policy that can be put into immediate operation."⁹

Wilson accepted the Garrison plan for a Continental Army, but the issue of a federal reserve that by-passed the state-supported National Guard soon raised a host of troubles. The National Guard Association, despite Secretary Garrison's peace-making efforts, opposed the War Department bill, and Representative James Hay of Virginia, chairman of the House military affairs committee, announced his opposition and his determination to prepare his own military bill. Wilson was caught between the ultra-preparedness advocates who were demanding universal military training, and his party's old guard who were unwilling to go beyond increases in the Regular Army and a greater federalization of the National Guard. In his first confrontation with the issues of military policy Wilson made his decision. He accepted the terms of the Hay bill, and Secretary Garrison, his Continental Army repudiated, resigned in anger and disgust.¹⁰

In his first involvement with military issues President Wilson had shown no signs of personal commitment or advocacy. He gave no thought to supporting universal training and he ultimately threw his support to the Southern traditionalists who feared any centralization of military power, and who regarded the National Guard as a state counterweight to federal military authority. Wilson's decision prevented a damaging split in his party, but it said little or nothing about his personal views. It seems likely that in 1916 Wilson was a free agent on the issues, unfettered by conviction, unhampered by intellectual commitment to any school of thought. He was free to make his decisions on party and political grounds, and the National Defense Act of 1916 drew nothing from his beliefs

⁹An Outline of Military Policy, prepared for the President by the Secretary of War, August 20, 1915, *ibid.*

¹⁰For the attitude of the National Guard see Martha Derthick, "Militia Lobby in the Missile Age," in Samuel P. Huntington, *Changing Patterns of Military Politics* (New York, 1962), 201-202. See also George C. Herring, Jr., "James Hay and the Preparedness Controversy," *Journal of Southern History*, XXX (November, 1964), 383-404.

or positive leadership. The "little army men" in the House, with their strong core of Southern leadership, had done battle for their views and had won. It was the opening skirmish in a long continued fight.

In the War Department, Garrison was replaced by Newton D. Baker, and the appointment of the supposedly "pacifist" Baker was taken by some as a sign of Wilson's anti-military views. On February 7, 1917, four days after the severance of diplomatic relations with Germany, Secretary Baker informed the President of War Department preparations "in the present emergency." Baker recommended the training of a large volunteer force "tentatively fixed at 500,000 men."¹¹ This was a repetition of Garrison's Continental Army plan but even this planning base was quickly overrun. The General Staff now decided that a volunteer system would be inadequate in raising military manpower, and that "compulsory service should be authorized for all forces of the United States. . . ."¹² After talks with his advisers Baker was convinced, and he asked Wilson to approve conscription if major forces had to be raised. Wilson thereupon ordered his Secretary to "have a law drawn at once, so that, if I should be obliged to go to the Congress, I can refer to it in my message as a law ready to be presented for their consideration."¹³ Wilson's order was carried out, and when Congress approved a declaration of war on April 7, the War Department bill for selective service was submitted.

In spite of the emergency tenor of proceedings the draft bill produced immediate opposition — and from exactly the same sources as in 1916. The House military affairs committee, now headed by Stanley H. Dent of Alabama, and heavily laden with Southern Democrats, had the bill "thrown into the waste basket."¹⁴ The committee denied the necessity for a draft and argued that volunteering was more democratic and a quicker means of raising manpower. In several conferences with President Wilson, Dent argued the merits of volunteering

¹¹Baker to Wilson, February 7, 1917, AG2638801, AGO Document File, RG 94, NARS.

¹²Acting Chief, WCD, to CofS, January 3, 1917, #89621, Box 655, *ibid*.

¹³Quoted in Edward M. Coffman, *The War to End All Wars; The American Military Experience in World War I* (New York, 1968), 24.

¹⁴Stanley H. Dent to George Huddleston, June 28, 1937, S. H. Dent Papers, Alabama Department of Archives and History.

and emphasized that a favorable vote in the House on the administration bill was most unlikely. This was the same threat of party dissidence that Hay had used so effectively in 1916. But where Wilson was willing to compromise in 1916 he was adamant in his demands for selective service in 1917. Perhaps he already realized the immense powers that flowed to a war-time President and he was quite prepared to make a fight on the issue. With Speaker Champ Clark, Majority Leader Claude Kitchin, and Chairman Dent all opposed to conscription, Wilson turned to the Republicans for managerial assistance.¹⁵ The selective service act was passed, the little army men were routed, and one step toward the overwhelming power of the modern wartime state was taken.

The pre-war drive for compulsory training had produced a strange assortment of opponents. Pacifists, liberals, socialists, organized labor, farmers, and Southern conservatives all saw a threat and a menace in compulsory training. Many were opposed to war and measures for war, others feared the rise of militarism, and almost all were scared by the nationalists vision of a disciplined America in which individuality was crushed and the only acceptable values were the mass values of the state. That picture was in glaring contrast to a pluralistic America that drew its strength from diversity, that had grown strong without centralism and coercive direction. But the war brought with it the very conformity and discipline that Roosevelt and Wood had preached. Among the thousands of new converts to that cause was President Woodrow Wilson.

For twenty months the fervor of total war seized the population. The majority of Americans actively supported an abridgement of their liberties and the expansion of governmental powers that was without precedence in the past. Unlike its allies who had fought too long and lost too much to sustain a sense of mission, the United States emerged from the war with patriotism unblemished and the image of the nation in all its collective strength still fresh in many minds. The miracles wrought by a cohesive national spirit, and the strength and

¹⁵For the fight over the draft, and the ideology of the "little army" men, see Robert David Ward, "Stanley Hubert Dent and American Military Policy, 1916-1920," *Alabama Historical Quarterly*, XXXIII (Fall and Winter, 1971), 177-189.

power that national organization could produce were on display for all to see.

The pre-war nationalists and their wartime converts saw no reason why these immediate lessons should be forgotten. The Armistice brought vistas of the nation as unified in peace as in war, with a disciplined labor force, a disciplined educational system, a disciplined population. Basic to this nationalist ideal was the introduction of universal military training. It was not offered in terms of supplying military force to meet a specific threat — although the outside world was a place of recurrent menace — but rather as an instrument of social education and instruction, capable of building common ideals and harnessing the individual to the higher truth and mission of the State.¹⁶

Before the war had come to an end there was a rising tide of agitation and advocacy for universal training for the post-war period, and the revival of the movement impressed the War Department with the need for action. On July 12, 1918, Chief of Staff Peyton C. March ordered his War Plans Division to undertake a study of universal training. The matter should "be given priority."¹⁷ At almost the same time President Wilson held a conference with representatives of the Universal Military Training League who found his response "entirely satisfactory." The President suggested that a bill be sent to him for consideration, and the League was quick to respond to this indication of presidential approval.¹⁸

The War Department planners had their own difficulties with postwar policies and legislation, but by December, 1918, General March had a completed bill calling for a Regular Army of 509,000 men, and he had the approval of Secretary Baker and President Wilson for universal military training.¹⁹ Moving with dispatch, Secretary Baker transmitted the War Depart-

¹⁶The motivation and ideology of training proponents is treated at length in the first author's study of universal military training.

¹⁷CofS to Director, WPD, July 12, 1918, CofS Doc. 1478, RG 165, NARS.

¹⁸Howard H. Gross to Henry L. Stimson, August 31, 1918, and Frank G. Logan to Stimson, August 31, 1918, Stimson Papers, Yale University Library.

¹⁹The vicissitudes of planning are treated in Edward M. Coffman, *The Hilt of the Sword; The Career of Peyton C. March* (Madison, 1966), 175-76. And see Peyton C. March, *The Nation At War* (New York, 1932), 331.

ment bill to Chairman Dent of the House committee, and requested that hearings be held. Baker and March intended to present the bill as an interim policy and gain enactment on that basis. They did not wish to entangle debate on issues concerning the National Guard or the even more volatile issue of universal training.²⁰

The War Department effort quickly to establish a legislative basis for the postwar army died at its initial step. After hearing testimony by Baker and March, Chairman Dent announced that it was impossible to pass permanent military legislation in the remaining days of that session. It was true that Dent's committee was hostile to the "big army" point of view, and it regarded the General Staff with suspicion and forboding. But Secretary Baker was so obviously less than candid, so determined not to deal with the real policy issues that were involved, that any expectation of favorable committee action could only have been based on ephemeral optimism or on the groundless assumption that the force and prestige of executive wartime requests would carry over after the war.²¹

Meeting failure in the piecemeal approach to legislation, the War Department proceeded to draw up another bill providing for the organization of the Regular Army and for universal military training. Secretary Baker submitted the bill to the House and Senate committees, now controlled by Republican majorities, on August 3, 1919.²²

What had been a matter for vociferous agitation across the nation now approached its moment of truth in congressional maneuver and debate. When this point was reached, political considerations came strongly to the fore. On January 19, 1920, Representative Frank W. Mondell of Wyoming, the Republican

²⁰Professor Coffman accounts for the omission of UMT in the War Department bill to General March's opposition. We believe it was the result of a specific legislative strategy on the part of the War Department.

²¹The committee members attempted time and again to get Baker's views on UMT, but the Secretary indulged in such confusing distinctions and equivocations that the congressmen gave up in disgust. See *Army Reorganization. Hearings Before the Committee on Military Affairs, House of Representatives, 65 Cong., 3 Sess., on H.R. 14560* (Washington, 1919).

²²March to Baker, June 3, 1919, WPD 591, RG 165, NARS; *Congressional Record*, 66 Cong., 1 Sess., 3600.

floor leader, warned that the leaders of the party "responsible for the inception of such legislation [for UMT] would be cast into political oblivion."²³ On the same day the Republican advisory committee of the Senate and House met in Senator Lodge's office and conferred with Will H. Hays, the chairman of the Republican National Committee. It was decided that universal military training should be rejected on the grounds of economy, but it was clear that there was as much concern over votes as expenditures. Scenting victory in November, it seemed unnecessarily dangerous to offer the Democrats the charge that the Republicans were the party of conscription.²⁴

The issue of universal military training had never followed a clear-cut demarcation along party lines. It was exactly the sort of "real" issue that suggested the irrational alignment of American parties. It was supported by a Democratic president and the agencies of his administration, but pushed most forcefully in Congress by Republicans. Now the Republican leadership had decided that the measure should be killed.

Quietly deserted by the Republicans, UMT was still supported by the Wilson administration. But on Thursday, February 5, the revolt by House Democrats began. Members were approached with the request to sign their names to a demand for a party caucus, and on Friday, E. W. Saunders, chairman of the caucus, formally issued a call for a meeting on the following Monday. The motives behind the caucus call were a subtle blend of principles and politics. The leaders in the move were Stanley Dent of Alabama and Claude Kitchin of North Carolina — both with impeccable credentials for disagreeing with the president, and both charter members of the little army group. There was no attempt to camouflage the purpose of the caucus: It was the announced intention of the Southerners to commit the party against UMT as a matter of principle.²⁵

As official Washington prepared for the lull of the coming weekend, Secretary of War Baker heard the news of the impending caucus. There were decisions to be made, and they

²³Washington Post, January 20, 1920.

²⁴Ibid., February 4, 1920; New York Times, February 4, 1920.

²⁵New York Times, February 6, 1920.

lay squarely on Baker himself. President Wilson was still confined within the cloistered recesses of the White House, recovering, but not recovered, from the massive stroke that ended his campaign for the Treaty of Versailles. In this void of executive leadership Baker moved on his own. It was his decision that a fight against the caucus should be made and he knew that such a fight could only be made in the name of the President. It is easy to question the wisdom of Baker's choice. He knew that the Republican leadership had deserted UMT and he knew the intensity of the opposition from Southern and Western Democrats. Even if a plea from Wilson deflected the caucus from public opposition it was certain that the idea of universal training was lost. To force a fight on these grounds was to set up the President either for repudiation by his fellow Democrats or for a sharp legislative defeat. Baker based his hopes on the potency of the presidency, on Wilson's power to whip the recalcitrant into line and produce a victory through force of will.

On Saturday, February 7, Secretary Baker addressed a letter to the President informing him of the Monday caucus meeting. The "inspiration of this activity," said Baker, was to appeal "to the Southern sentiment against the training of colored men." A caucus commitment against UMT would embarrass loyal Democrats who still supported "the moderate program proposed by the War Department with your approval." If the President felt that he "ought to give counsel" to the assembled Democrats, "I suggest," said Baker, "that you sign and send me the letter which I venture to draw and herewith enclosed." The signed letter would be distributed to House Democrats "so that in the caucus it could be read and considered."²⁶

There is only conjecture as to what happened in the White House. Baker received his prepared letter with Wilson's signature, and for the outside world the letter became a personal expression of the President's views and values. Baker sent copies of the letter to the caucus leaders who now learned that the President was willing to make a public commitment to his stand and to run the risks of a public confrontation with his

²⁶Baker to Wilson, February 7, 1920, Newton D. Baker Papers, Library of Congress.

own party.²⁷

When the House of Representatives adjourned on Monday afternoon, the caucus session began with 123 Democrats in attendance. Representative Caldwell of New York immediately took the offensive and read the Wilson letter to his colleagues. The assembled Democrats heard their President suggest that it would be unwise to make a party issue on the subject of compulsory training. Apart from its obvious military benefits "it may have the highest possible advantages." The President expressed his

strong feeling against action by the caucus which will tend to interpose an arbitrary party determination to the consideration which this subject should receive from the best thought of the members of the House, considering alike the national emergencies which may confront us and the great disciplinary and other advantages which such a system plainly promises for the young men of the country.²⁸

With the President's strong admonitions before the caucus, Caldwell moved for adjournment. The revolt would be terminated, and Wilson would have a victory over his rebellious party leaders. But "the motion was not agreed to" and the rebellion continued.²⁹ Representative Ayres of Kansas introduced a resolution recording the House Democrats as opposed to the passage of any measure providing for "universal compulsory military service or training in time of peace." For the next three hours there were motions and debate in an effort to refine

²⁷Baker to Kitchin and Baker to Clark, February 9, 1920, Box 35, folder 573, Claude Kitchin Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

²⁸The letter is in the Woodrow Wilson Papers, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, in the Claude Kitchin Papers, Box 35, folder 573, and in the Baker Papers. It was published in the New York Times, February 10, 1920. The military policy committee of the American Legion was in session on February 9, 1920, when it learned of plans for the Democratic caucus. A telegram was sent to the caucus chairman endorsing universal military training. See *Report of the Legislative Committee to the Second National Convention of the American Legion, September 27, 28, and 29, 1920*, 175, American Legion National Headquarters Library, Indianapolis, Indiana.

²⁹Journal of the House Democratic Caucus, February 9, 1920, 26, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress.

Ayres' motion. Finally, by a vote of 106 to 17, a resolution was adopted that "it is the sense of this caucus that no measure should be passed at this Congress providing for universal military service or training."³⁰ The little army men had won a victory.

Following the caucus the House Democratic leaders basked in their triumph. William Jennings Bryan wrote Kitchin to congratulate him on "a great stroke," and offered his view that the caucus action "will insure an anti-universal military training plank in our platform. It will defeat the propositions in Congress and it will keep it out of the Republican platform and that will eliminate the military candidates."³¹ Kitchin replied and expressed his fear that "the President and Mr. Baker" would fight to commit the party to UMT in the platform. Warren Worth Bailey, former congressman from Pennsylvania, also offered his congratulations and observed that it "was the heaviest blow ever struck by a party caucus at the accredited party leader." Once again Kitchin expressed his fear of a further fight over the platform with "the President and a crowd of his flunkies."³²

Democrats in the House "frankly stated" that their action was an assertion of their "independence." They were better informed on public opinion than the President and equally entitled to express their judgment.³³ The press was in agreement that President Wilson had been rebuked and repudiated and that the cause of UMT had suffered a major setback. The only kind word for the President, emphasizing how far he had gone in his ideological travels, came from Charles D. Orth of the National Security League who congratulated him on his

³⁰*Ibid.*, 29; New York Times, February 10, 1920. And see Hamilton (Ohio) *Journal*, February 10, 1920, in Records of the American Union Against Militarism, Swarthmore College Peace Collection. See also Telegram, Scott Ferris to Champ Clark, February 9, 1920, Kitchin Papers.

³¹Bryan to Kitchin, February 10, 1920, Kitchin Papers.

³²Bailey to Kitchin, February 10, 1920 and Kitchin to Bailey, February 13, 1920. Bailey went further and argued that "to escape from its fateful and fatal thrall-dom to President Wilson is to have gained once more the highroad to . . . meritorious service." Bailey's only regret was that the caucus had not shown its disapproval "on the unspeakable Palmer program for the suppression of public opinion. . . ."

³³New York *Times*, February 10, 1920; Washington *Post*, February 11, 1920.

stand.³⁴

For the issue of universal military training, developments after the Democratic caucus were pure anti-climax. The Senate Republicans amended their bill to make training voluntary, and in conference the House resisted all efforts to organize the National Guard directly under the control of the War Department.³⁵ There was a brief flurry, unknown to Congress or the public, as Secretary Baker debated whether to advise Wilson to veto the bill for its flagrant departures from War Department recommendations. But Secretary Baker, realizing that the Department might fare less well in another round of congressional debate, recommended that the bill be approved. On June 4, 1920, Wilson signed the National Defense Act into law.³⁶

The real winners of the postwar debate on military policy were not the citizen army advocates who claimed a victory, but the little army men of the South and West. They had defeated the plan for a 500,000 man Regular Army, they had effectively stymied the enormously powerful drive for universal military training, they had beaten down the hopes for a strengthened General Staff, and they had maintained the delicate balance of state and federal power symbolized in the National Guard. In the process they had repudiated their President who in their view had already betrayed the party's values and who seemed determined to preserve a wartime authoritarianism repugnant to the ideological heirs of Jefferson.³⁷

³⁴New York *Times*, February 11, 1920. On Wilson's western tour to rally support for the League he continually stressed that American refusal to join would mean "we would have to have the biggest army in the world," and "there will have to be universal conscription." See Ray Stannard Baker and William E. Dodd, eds., *The Public Papers of Woodrow Wilson, War and Peace*, 2 vols. (New York, 1927), II, 392.

³⁵*Congressional Record*, 66 Cong., 2 Sess., 7305, 7318.

³⁶See Coffman, *The Hilt of the Sword*, 80.

³⁷It is usual to account for Southern opposition to selective service and universal training on racial grounds. Such motivations were certainly present - exemplified by Representative Thomas W. Harrison of Virginia who remarked that there was nothing as irresponsible "as a young negro boy rigged out in brass buttons and with a gun." See *Congressional Record*, 66 Cong., 2 Sess., 4033. But it would take the adroit "single themer" to find racial motivation in the Southern opposition to the General Staff, in the question of the size of the Regular Army, or in the issue of the constitutional bases for National Guard organization. Men

In the sharply polarized positions fostered by national debate, President Wilson had been cast with the very men and the same forces he had always opposed. When he supported universal military training he spoke the language of Theodore Roosevelt and Leonard Wood, he espoused the same goals as the National Security League. The war produced its casualties — and some of them occurred at home.

like Kitchin and Dent saw themselves as upholders of the Jeffersonian position, and it drove them inexorably into an anti-military position.

BOOK REVIEW

John Hope Franklin, *A Southern Odyssey: Travelers in the Antebellum North* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1976. Pp. xvii, 299. Notes, bibliography, index. \$12.50).

What this Southerner finds most impressive about *A Southern Odyssey* is the evidence that as travellers, Southerners haven't changed all that much in the last century, despite the deluge of literature that tells us that the South is being rapidly homogenized into a general American accent. Southerners travelled North in the nineteenth century for precisely the same reasons they do now (education, business, arts, politics, health, religion) and behaved very much as they do now (arranging schedules so as to travel with friends, staying at the same hotels year after year, seeking out persons from their home area).

Southern travellers of the last century found the North fascinating and educational, and when they expressed their admiration, most also felt bound to reaffirm their loyalty to Southern assets. They were as quick to criticize Northern shortcomings as Northern travellers were to point out Southern deficiencies. Particularly were they critical of Northern inability to cope with the race problem any more successfully than they had done back home. Yet, to the credit of the Southern traveller, his criticism of the North seems relatively free of that infuriating condescension that so often afflicts Northern observations of the South.

Professor Franklin, distinguished historian at the University of Chicago, used a wide variety of primary sources: diaries, letters, journals, magazines, newspapers, and guidebooks. He had concentrated his research on the major manuscript collections in the South believing the resources were so vast that he could not read everything and that beyond a certain point the material becomes repetitive. Manuscript collections located in Alabama were thus bypassed, although such eminent Alabamians as Clement Claiborne Clay, Virginia Clay Clopton, and Henry W. Hilliard are included among Southern travellers discussed. For Alabamians, the author has, however, consulted the extensive collections of Alabama materials at the Univer-

sity of North Carolina and Duke University.

Included in the volume is a most interesting collection of nineteenth-century photographs, drawings, and portraits. Contemporary comments accompany these illustrations, and this combination gives the reader a deep sense of the world in which these travellers moved.

Professor Franklin presented three of these chapters in an earlier form as the 1972 Walter Lynwood Fleming Lectures in Southern History at Louisiana State University. In this revised and expanded form the book well deserves the Jules F. Landry Award which it received in 1975. *A Southern Odyssey* is beautifully written and provides a fascinating glimpse into a little-studied aspect of antebellum Southern culture life.

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John D. Cushman, Jr. THE SOUND OF BELLS: THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN SOUTH FLORIDA 1892-1969. (Gainesville, Florida: The University Presses of Florida, 1976. xiv, 378 pp. \$15.00.)

What a delightful occasion it is to open a gift and then discover, nestled in the folds of the wrapping, an unexpected surprise present as a bonus. This was my feeling as I read THE SOUND OF BELLS by Professor Joseph Cushman, Jr., of Sewanee.

The original and expected gift is a well-written, thoroughly documented chronicle of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of South Florida. The surprise bonus is the colorful history of the southern portion of our neighboring state of Florida.

All the ingredients for the setting of a major novel are here, and one can almost envision the saga of a multi-generational family living and planting and fighting and breeding and reaping and buying and selling and suffering and conquering through the past eight decades.

We see the tropical giant begin to come to life with the four

million-acre post-reconstruction land sell-off, followed by the dramatic burrowing of the railroads through the swamps and jungles, opening the land for citrus-growing by the wave of British immigrants who expanded the Empire without planting the Union Jack; we see the fortunes made in the sun and suddenly lost in the frost; we watch with wonder the strange and never-quite-satisfying relationship with the Seminole Indians; and we are transported inexorably into the present through the pendulum swing of tourist and real estate boom and bust, the identity crisis following World War II, and the ideological turmoil produced by the second Yankee invasion of the 1950's.

Through all of these events the Episcopal Church was present and its influence was felt. The steady, and in the post-war years spectacular, growth of the Church attests to the missionary spirit of the bishops, clergy, and laity who came to this exotic peninsula.

Professor Cushman has captured the sense of adventure, the pioneer perspective, and the devoted dedication of these latter-day pilgrims who found, opened, planted, and nourished this land and this Diocese "... accompanied by the jubilant clamor of the sound of bells."

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Edward W. Chester. *Sectionalism, Politics, and American Diplomacy*. (Metuchen, N. J., Scarecrow Press, 1975. Pp. xiii, 348.)

Professor Chester sets himself the admirable tasks of synthesizing "into a meaningful whole" the numerous "books and articles that examine . . . the impact of sectionalism on American diplomacy: and of imposing "order upon [the] chaos" which results from the "bewildering variety of standards . . . and approaches" that characterize these works (pp. iii-iv). Before taking up these tasks the author presents an impressive list of "distinguished scholars who have read and commented on an earlier draft of this work" (p. vii). Unfortunately the

work at hand does not measure up to the standards set by the distinguished scholars whose names are invoked.

Reviews focusing on such matters as methodology, concepts, and interpretation are obviously more valuable than those which deal with such elementary matters as spelling, faulty word selection, poor sentence structure, and general obfuscation. In this case, however, there is no choice; the turgid prose, apparently unsoiled by an editor's mark, defies comprehension on the level necessary for the more weighty critique. The reader is quickly alerted to this state of the writing art when he encounters the phrase "Anti-Federalist Party or Democratic Republicans" nine times on the first two pages. Such repetition is inexcusable even to those who can accept the two terms as interchangeable labels. Frequent use of the personal pronouns "we" and "our" when referring to the United States and its policies, territory, allies, etc. reflects a provincialism which is out of place in scholarly literature, as the use of such colloquialisms as "quarterbacked" (p. 276). Other examples of the lack of editing include the misspelling of Guadalupe at least ten times in two different forms (pp. 38, 72, 73, 87, 92, & 327) and Coahuila twice (pp. 72 & 341), use of the indecisive and frequently useless expression "one might add (or say, find, see, etc.)," and such awkward constructions as "widespread resentment against Japanese landowners, especially the small ones who were acquiring large acreage" (p. 277); "two New Hampshire counties and one Vermont one sent delegates" (p. 31), and "the last two years of the Pierce Administration and the last two years of the Buchanan one" (p. 76). Reference to "the short-lived William Henry Harrison" (p. 37) is not a pleasant choice of words. Poor construction results in a sentence (p. 7) which seems to say that Nova Scotia and other parts of Canada are included in present day United States, another (p. 20) placing Haiti and the Dominican Republic on an island named Santo Domingo, two (p. 38) suggesting that Maine and Rhode Island are not in New England, and one (p. 257) asserting that Nixon was the first "newly-elected President" to face a congress controlled by the opposition (Zachary Taylor scholars would find that unacceptable).

While confusing passages abound in the book, the author achieved a new high in obfuscation in dealing with the South-

ern minority who supported Oregon expansion. We are told (p. 66): "The legislature of Mississippi, for example, adopted a resolution in 1846 supporting the claim of the United States up to 54° 40', while about twenty members of Congress from the South were hard-core expansionists. Thanks to the influence of Calhoun, there were none from South Carolina; twelve were serving their first term in Congress in 1846, four their second. Most were small-town lawyers and farmers, and all but Henry Hilliard of Alabama were Democrats who placed party loyalty first." As close competitors with the above are two single sentence examples: "It is not improbable that an insurrection would indeed have broken out, had not the epidemic of yellow fever there hindred the realization of this threat" (p. 19) and "... Timothy Pickering reached the apex of Congressional rhetoric against Jefferson in an unprecedented harangue in which he attributed sinister motives to the President" (pp. 24-25).

At a higher level of criticism the absence of source citations in this work is a strong testament to their value. When the author credits Southern cotton growers with forcing Dulles to withdraw the offer to finance the Aswan Dam because of fear of Competition from Egyptian cotton (pp. 232, 253, & 278) or Buchanan with pursuing a policy aimed at reducing Mexico to a U.S. protectorate (p. 85), one would like to see his sources. Vague references in the text to works, journals, and authors and bibliographic essays at the end of chapters are not adequate substitutes. A perusal of the bibliographic essays and the formal bibliography indicates, at least in the areas of the reviewer's competence, that the author did not consult some of the best sources on the topics he attempted to handle. The author puts in the bibliography, for example, Pletcher's work on the Garfield and Arthur administrations but not Pletcher's more recent and penetrating study *The Diplomacy of Annexation: Texas, Oregon, and the Mexican War*. Also missing from the bibliography is Paul Neff Garber's fine work on the Gadsden treaty although the treaty is discussed in the text.

In his preface the author welcomes criticism of "his efforts . . . on their own terms, not in terms of the book [he] did not intend to write." Is it too much to suggest that the book he intended to write did not get published? I would like

to second a suggestion made by Neill Macaulay in a review a few years back in the *Hispanic American Historical Review* that publishers have a responsibility to both readers and authors to protect against the publication of poorly prepared and edited manuscripts.

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Bell Irvin Wiley. *Confederate Women*. Contributions in American History, Number 38 edited by Jon L. Wakelyn. (Westport, Conn. and London: Greenwood Press, 1975, xiv, 304. \$10.95).

In the post Civil War centennial years a score of historians have focused their attention on Southern women and their role in that tragic conflict. Happily, Bell I. Wiley, one of the most distinguished historians of the war era, has chosen the women of 1861-1865 as the subject of a book simply entitled: *Confederate Women*.

No doubt, the work will be enthusiastically welcomed by Civil War fans not only for its interesting style, but largely because of its manifest exhibition of information and professional standards.

Professor Wiley frankly confesses that "women have always had more fascination for me than men: and proceeds to demonstrate his predilection by selecting three of the most fascinating women of the Confederacy. His choice succinctly accompanied by a characterization are: Mary Boykin Chesnut — Southern Intellectual, Virginia Tunstall Clay — Alabama Belle, and Varinia Howell Davis — First Lady, Wife, and Mother. Each of these is awarded a chapter and a final account concentrates on the activities of all the women of the "Lost Cause."

Of special interest to Alabamians is the chapter of Virginia Clay. Here Professor Wiley is at his best as he describes the "Belle of the Fifties" shifting her gaiety, frivolousness, and self-indulgence into the most serious "Sixties."

The Alabama woman is judged with the deserved harshness and yet with mature understanding by the author as that king of character which always seems to inhabit every period of crisis in history. Virginia is exposed in all her weaknesses of selfishness, egotism, and at times heartless indifference to the calamities of war-times. Although treated as less than an intellectual, Mrs. Clay is still pointed out as one of these charming creatures whose sparkling personality contributed something to raising the spirits of those men and women who were less capable of throwing off the melancholy of difficult times.

Virginia Clay was in a real way the "hostess with the mostest" of the Confederacy's high society and in that role she had no equals. She emerges also as the eternal optimist — a Scarlet O'Hara with the capacity for survival of her family and herself. In the adversity which followed the war and the shattering of that "fairy tale" world of the legendary Old South, Virginia Clay finally emerges as a truly strong woman.

There is much to be admired in Wiley's book. Its scholarship, rare illustrations, and bibliography will rank it among the best books treating women of the Confederacy. Professor Wiley has given another lasting contribution to the enormous bibliography of the Civil War.

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Blaine A. Brownell. *THE URBAN ETHOS IN THE SOUTH 1920-1930*. (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1975, Pp. xxi + 238, cloth \$12.50.)

"Ethos" is usually defined as "distinguishing character, tone, or guiding beliefs." In this complex, well-researched volume, Brownell delves into the origins and characteristics of the Southern urban ethos. Although he asserts that the threads of the urban ethos in the South are so diffuse "that they can probably never be completely unraveled or precisely sorted," (page 217) he has succeeded in presenting an abstract subject in remarkable concrete terms.

Brownell concentrates primarily on "booster" magazines and periodicals published in key cities in the New South between the end of World War I and the crash of the stock market in 1929. He has sealed several gaps in his analysis with newspaper accounts. He carefully explains that his account is not from the point of view of "the little people" from the "bottom up." Instead, he deals with the designs, dreams, and philosophies of the business-oriented middle class, and in this fashion, he has attempted to demonstrate how these views shaped much of Southern urban existence in the 1920's.

Brownell's study includes detailed views of urbanization in seven key cities: Atlanta, Birmingham, Charleston, Knoxville, Memphis, Nashville, and New Orleans. Much of this book is a consideration of the complex socio-economic factors underlying the urban ethos.

The author neatly ties the New South Creed of the late 19th century with the urban ethos of the 1920's. Essentially, both philosophies centered around a profound belief in "progress, expansion, stability, civic loyalty, [and] urban unity" (page 216). In the 1920's, the urban ethos became an important part of urban leaders' attempts to compete with rival cities and to maintain unity during periods of great social fragmentation. According to Brownell's findings, the psychological prescriptions of the urban ethos could not be nurtured without a solid background of "social and economic realities" (page 220). In many cases, this support was lacking.

There are a few shortcomings in this otherwise excellent book. Brownell is a talented rhetorician, but on occasion in this work, his prose is somewhat dry, monotonous, and overworked. The language of his primary sources may be at fault in this case. Also, in regard to his sources, I agree with his contention that many blacks were more interested in racial problems than in urban boosterism (page xvii), but I feel that he should have utilized a few black sources to prove his point.

The serious scholar will probably enjoy this book more than the casual reader. All students of Southern history will benefit from this outstanding work and its comprehensive bib-

liographical essay on Southern urban studies.

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